The AMERICAN CRISIS AND THE WAR

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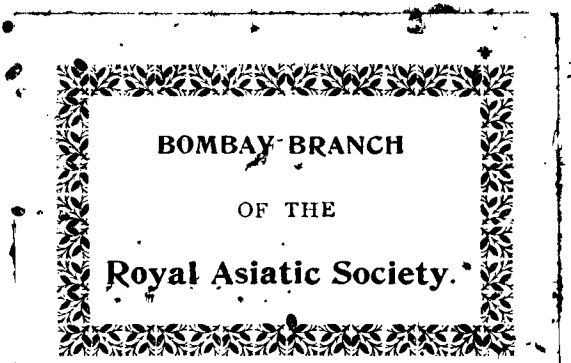

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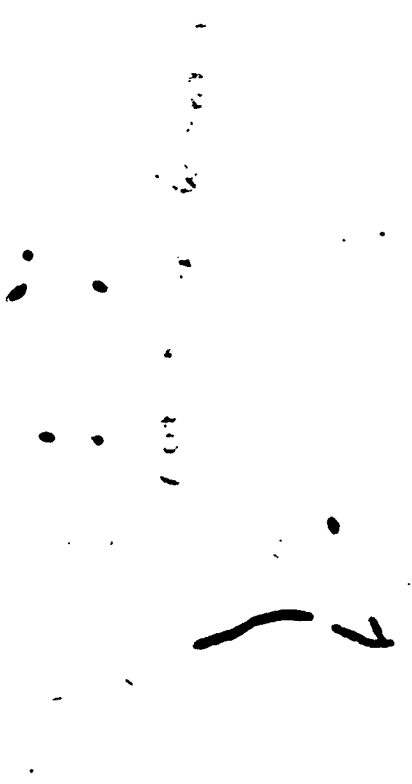

THE AMERICAN CRISIS AND THE WAR

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"Problems of Power"

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"It is high time to leave a policy of expedients, of opportunism, of entanglements and crooked ways, of parliamentary hypocrisy, concealment, and compromise that characterises the languid life of worn-out nations, and return to the virgin, loyal, simple, logical policy that derives directly from a moral standard, that is the consequence of a ruling principle, that has always inaugurated the young life of peoples that are called to high destinies."—MAZZINI, "To the Italians."

"Neutrals are almost always sacrificed, and peace is usually concluded at their expense."—Ancient maxim of the Princes of the House of Savoy.

"He who, in circumstances so critical, is incapable of foreseeing the future has not the right to assume the responsibilities of public office." — VENIZELOS: Speech, Oct. 21, 1915.

"I am perfectly of your mind, that measures of great temper are necessary with the Germans; and am not without apprehensions, that, through their indiscretions, or ours, or both, great disorders may one day arise among us. . . . . Not being used to liberty, they know not how to make a modest use of it. . . . . In short, unless the stream of their importation could be turned from this to other colonies, as you very judiciously propose, they will soon so outnumber us, that all the advantages we have will not in my opinion be able to preserve our language, and even our government will become precarious."—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, Letter to Richard Jackson.

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PREFACE

ON September 7, 1914, the German Emperor wrote to President Woodrow Wilson asking him for "an impartial opinion" with regard to the war which had broken out in Europe five weeks before.

On October 8 the Dutch papers reproduced from the *North German Gazette* Mr. Wilson's reply to the Imperial feeler. Mr. Wilson had read the Emperor's letter "with the greatest interest and sympathy," and he declared that he was "honoured" at being the object of such a missive. He prayed God that the war would soon come to an end, and remarked cautiously and sententiously that later on there would be a "day of settlement." "Where injustices have found a place," he said, "results

are sure to follow, and all those who have been at fault will have to answer for them." He demurred to forming and uttering a definite opinion. Such action, he urged, would be injudicious and even precipitate. Speaking, therefore, "as friend to friend," he informed the German Emperor—who had just sacked Belgium, and whose aviators were then dropping bombs over the statue of Napoleon in the Place Vendôme—that he could not doubt that the Emperor would understand if he "reserved his opinion until the end of the war, when all events and circumstances could be regarded in their proper perspective and correct bearings."

The American people had not "reserved" their opinion. Their ignorance as to European conditions has always been profound, but the crime of Germany in violating the neutrality of Belgium—a crime confessed by the German Chancellor—and Germany's atrocious methods of making war among an innocent folk, instantly aroused throughout the United

States feelings of horror and of reprobation.

I was in the United States from mid November, 1914, to April, 1915, frequenting Americans of every class and of every type in the large towns and villages throughout the vast region from the Atlantic seaboard to the lake cities of the Middle West. I lectured on the causes of the war and on its significance for the United States in schools, colleges and universities. The students of Andover, Yale, Princeton and Harvard, the bankers and clubmen of New York, the manufacturers and the social world of Buffalo and Cleveland, the chance acquaintances in the promiscuous company one met in the "smokers" of the great express trains, everyone with whom I came into contact,—every one, as I recall, without a single exception—declared his stupefaction at the conduct of Germany and his corresponding sympathy for the cause of the Allies. It was obvious that there were many millions of Americans who,

however glad that the United States was not at war, were in no doubt as to the entire culpability of Germany, and as to the innocence of France and England and Russia. In the music-halls and streets one heard, as often as "Tipperary," the doggerel:—

I didn't raise my son to be a soldier,
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.
Who dares to put a musket on his shoulder,
To kill some other mother's darling boy?
The nations ought to arbitrate their quarrels,
It's time to put the sword and gun away.
There'd be no war to-day,
If mothers all would say,
"I didn't raise my son to be a soldier!"

And nothing, no doubt, could be more characteristic of the heedless pacificism of our community than this popular protest against the very idea of war. But at the same time it was clear that the instinctive sentiment of America, in the early months of the war, vibrated frankly and articulately with the hearts of those peoples who were supporting the shock of the aggression of Germany. And Belgium

and France and Serbia were already learning that there was nothing platonic about American sympathy. We were already many millions, those of us whom the President of the Republic was to brand, a few months later, almost as with a bull of excommunication:—

> There are some men among us and many residents abroad who, though born and bred in the United States, and calling themselves Americans, have so far forgotten themselves and their honour as citizens as to put their passionate sympathy with one or other side in the great European conflict above their regard for the peace and dignity of the United States. They also preach and practise disloyalty. No laws, I suppose, can reach corruptions of the mind and heart, but I should not speak of others [the Pan-German conspirators on American soil] without also speaking of these, and expressing the even deeper humiliation and scorn which every self-possessed and thoughtfully patriotic American must feel when he thinks of these things and the discredit they are daily bringing upon us.[1]

This is a strange document. It is certainly one of the strangest in our

[1] "Annual Message," December 7, 1915.

annals. In Switzerland, where racial divisions are more clearly accentuated even than in the United States, reciprocally contrary sympathies were manifested at the outset of the war, and the Federal Council, which, like the Government of the United States, had neglected to protest against the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, took certain natural precautions in order to arrest any movement injurious to the harmony of the Federal body-politic. But the Swiss idea of liberty is very different from the American idea; it is bound up with the notion of Federalism. Swiss pacificism is based on Swiss preparation for war. Swiss neutrality is, no doubt, guaranteed by treaties; it is guaranteed, above all, by the rifle of the Swiss mountaineer. On January 1, 1915, M. Motta became President of the Swiss Confederation, and it is a suggestive lesson in Comparative Politics to read his declarations to the deputy for Geneva, M. Édouard Chapuisat, in connection with

the utterances of his Presidential cousin in Washington[1]:—

> The divergencies of sympathy and opinion that have appeared in Switzerland, if you examine them without passion, are quite explicable. Natural affinities, personal relations, predisposed certain minds in favour of one or other side, even before they had examined the question in its political aspects. But observe how, after all, notwithstanding the different races that live on our soil, our country is united. Is not that, indeed, the evident proof that, in order to form a people, it is necessary to lift, over and above questions of race, a common ideal, visible to all eyes?

In contrast with this statesmanlike utterance of the Swiss President, the passage cited from the Annual Message of the President of the United States has a theocratic and even curiously un-American ring. It is not an easy task to explain how a Head of the State at Washington could fulminate futile anathemas like this. That, however, is exactly the all but impossible task I have undertaken in this book. Mr. Wilson's conception of "neu-

[1] "Le Rôle de la Suisse," by Édouard Chapuisat, page 101. Chapelot, 1916.

trality," its causes and its consequences, this is the subject of the present volume. That the Great War was bound to bring to the surface a long-latent crisis in the domestic as well as in the international affairs of the United States; that no policy of "studied aloofness," to use the expression of Westlake, could satisfactorily deal with it; and that "there is nothing morally exalted in the position of neutrality"[1] seemed to me to be the

[1] "There is nothing morally exalted in the position of neutrality, and the panegyrics that we too often hear poured out upon that happy condition of comparative comfort are not altogether deserved. It has long since been recognised by publicists that, if we were to admit any standard of justice in the affairs of nations, the one side or the other in most wars must be right in the main; to abstain from participation in a just war could not, with decent regard for the opinion of mankind, be based upon indifference to the result, but must be predicated upon the conviction that warlike effort on the part of the neutral nation would be so fraught with injury and peril to its own interests as to justify it in abstaining from participating in the conflict. That dry old utilitarian, Jeremy Bentham, thought

things best worth saying to one's compatriots in the early days of the war. This conviction rooted itself more and more deeply in my mind in proportion as the action of the agents of Dr. Dernburg, insolent emissary of the Wilhelmstrasse, became more efficient, and as the character of our crisis became more appalling. I could not but recall certain pages that I had written twenty-two years before:—

> Englishmen, educated wisely for generations in liberty and self-reliance, and amidst that collection of rights called free institutions, were able in America to work out their own salvation without even the amount of fear and trembling that is prescribed, and that one might have thought necessary. Suddenly, however, representatives of races without the habits of self-reliance, and unpractised in the technique of practical government, invade the country, and the first scientific result is a swamping tidal wave . . . America

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the test to be whether the good gained by entering the conflict was offset by the harm to be done humanity."—From "Neutrality, Permanent Difficulties and Present Perils," by Hon. Frederick R. Coudert; published by the Law Academy of Philadelphia, 1915.

of the last thirty or forty years bears scarcely any resemblance to the original English New England. She has taken a step from which now there is no going back. She is selling her original birthright for a conglomerate mess of pottage, in which "Irish stew," "mulligatawny soup," "corn bread," "sauerkraut" and "lager beer" are staple ingredients. The modern America of the States is entering upon certain social problems absolutely new to it. These problems must be settled by methods for which she will not be able to find any precedent in her English traditions. For her earlier history, indeed almost for the first two centuries of her history, the phenomena with which she had to deal were distinct, definite, what the scientists call isolated, and therefore comparatively simple. The complicated tangle of those that now exist is so very perplexing that she may well tremble at the problem of unravelling it. . . . Constitutional Government in England has been self-government in leading-strings. The early colonists in America were largely Englishmen, with all the English training, who believed that under favourable conditions the leading strings could be snapped. They were perfectly right. But they who builded the house no longer sit at the head of the table, and all about the board is a motley throng. What is to be the nature of the remaining courses of the banquet or the quality of the after-dinner wine and speeches, he must be

either a clever schoolboy or a wise prophet to suggest.[1]

These verities, a quarter of a century ago, were patent only to a few. The World War was to render them commonplace to the general. If it were possible to contemplate that war solely from an American angle, no American patriot could regret the war, for it is difficult to see how, without the shock produced by that war, our national unity could be looked forward to as a certainty, and as a certainty not too remote.

W. M. F.

PARIS, *June* 9, 1916.

[1] "Patriotism and Science," pp. 109-113. Roberts Bros., Boston, 1893.

INTRODUCTION

THE history of the World War is almost entirely a history of hesitations The word "hesitation" provides a convenient key to most of the war's mysteries. Germany willed the war and for years had been preparing it. But England's "hesitation" to do the one thing needful —make Germany understand that she was not afraid of war, and stood shoulder to shoulder in arms with France, not only in the week preceding the invasion of France, Belgium and Luxemburg, but during the four or five years before the fatal August of 1914—caused the particular war that occurred just when that war occurred. On the other hand, if France and Russia and Italy, prudently pacific Powers, had not chronically "hesitated" ever since 1904, in face of wanton German aggression, a World War would

have come earlier than it did. Again, after the Great War broke out, the record of the nations, great and small, has been a series of continued-stories of "hesitations."

But there are "hesitations" and "hesitations." The sole problem for the historian is to arrive at a clear statement of the nature of these hesitations. Each nation has had its own reasons for delay, its own special and often tragic decisions to make as regards neutrality or active participation. The blow dealt by the hammer of the German Thor, on the 2nd of August, 1914, was so astounding that the impact was felt in every country of the planet. The account of how the nations reacted constitutes almost the entire subject-matter of any adequate history of our time. The immediate reactions of France and Russia; the less immediate and hesitant, yet definitive, reaction of England; the hesitation of Italy during a period of nine months; the hesitation for more than a year of the Balkan Powers;

the singularly interesting hesitations of the United States—all these long delays, readjustments, procrastinations, belated decisions, slowly dissipating illusions are so many separate chapters in the most interesting record of historic psychology that human annals have to show.

The chapter of the hesitations of the United States is not one of the least instructive, nor, in spite of appearances, is it one of the least explicable. The United States was the only Power, with the exception of Italy, that took, during the war, a decision to which she was not constrained by forces beyond her own control. The stand which she eventually made was a belated one, it was an inadequate one, and it would have been well for her higher interests if she had made even that inadequate one earlier. Why she did not make it earlier; what she might have done, and what, indeed, had she been adequately informed and properly guided, she would have done, will form the subject of the present book.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS AND THE WAR

CHAPTER I

The First Reactions of Washington

WE are eighteen full moons on the hither side of the most monstrous cataclysm that has ever befallen human society. Yet in the middle of July, 1914, so tranquil were all the political seismographs in Europe that statesmen and crowned heads were joyously planning their annual outings at Vichy, Hombourg, Aix, and the North Sea fiords. That the World War which had been maturing since 1904, the date of the Franco-British *entente*, would come before 1917 everyone of the gentlemen so peacefully packing their trunks for a quiet holiday in the midsummer of 1914 knew full well. But, meanwhile, they had the full conviction—there was perhaps a single exception, the far-sighted French statesman who then represented his country in Berlin—that they could look forward to at least one agreeable autumn more. Two weeks later the world saw—what it saw! The European Continent was defiled under its inhabitants. The very earth seemed to reel to and fro like a drunkard. The moon was confounded and the sun ashamed. Louvain and Malines and Dinant were in ashes.

An entire nation had been, not carried away into exile unto the waters of Babylon, but hunted from its soil towards an asylum in the friendly land of France, by the waters of the British Channel. The Great Power of the Western Hemisphere looked on, pitying and aghast, but silent—and magnificently neutral. To many a European we seemed to be maintaining the classical impartiality of Pilate.

Had not the President of the United States himself struck the note? Had he not, as early as August 18th—the date of the official neutrality proclamation was August 4th—assuming the leadership of the American people which constitutionally belongs to him in that plebiscitary Republic, defined American neutrality as a political neutrality, affecting not merely the international relations of the United States, and even as a neutrality of soul, a neutrality of sentiment, a neutrality of opinion? "It is entirely *within our own choice* what the war's effects upon us will be," said the President, with a naive optimism, blind to the real character of the fated event that had just shivered the planet—blind, above all, to the beauty of the opportunity thus thrust upon the United States to consolidate her vital interests, and to justify throughout the world the renown of her peculiar birthright.

I speak, he said, a solemn word of warning to you against that deepest, most subtle, most essential breach of neutrality which may spring out of partisanship,

out of passionately taking sides. The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name during these days that are to try men's souls. *We must be impartial in thought as well as in action*, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party to the struggle before another.

Evidently this was terribly unambiguous counsel. But it was the kind of responsible utterance that excellently facilitates the task of the historian. Words are a subtle instrument, but it is a fearful fate for a literary artist to become the victim of words. The President of the United States solemnly warned his compatriots against taking sides, recommended them even to be "impartial in thought." He was oblivious of the fact that this warning and this recommendation were the proof that he himself had no doubt that "impartiality" was possible, even in thought, before the hideous spectacle of such a series of collective crimes on the part of a bewitched mob of human beings calling itself a civilised people as history had never recorded, and had never even expected to record. "My thought is of America," declared Mr. Wilson; but the "America" of which he was thinking was not the "America" of the past, ignorantly supposed in Europe to be the only "America," nor yet the "America" of the future—the rapid construction and fusioning of which the unexpected European war now happily rendered possible—but the heterogeneous "America" of the immediate present, the latent reactions of

which at such an hour were, no doubt, a terrifying notion to harbour and on which to meditate. How terrifying let the President himself declare on his own responsibility :—

> The people of the United States are drawn from many nations, and chiefly from the nations now at war. It is natural and inevitable that there should be the utmost variety and sympathy of desire among them with regard to the issues and circumstances of the conflict. Some will wish one nation, others another, to succeed in the momentous struggle. It will be easy to excite passion and difficult to allay it. Those responsible for exciting it will assume a heavy responsibility; responsibility for no less a thing than that the people of the United States, whose love of their country and whose loyalty to its Government should unite them as Americans all, bound in honor and affection to think first of her and her interests, may be divided in camps of hostile opinions, hot against each other, involved in the war itself in impulse and opinion, if not in action. Such diversions among us would be fatal to our peace of mind, and might seriously stand in the way of the proper performance of our duty as the one great nation at peace, the one people holding itself ready to play a part of impartial mediation and speak the counsels of peace and accommodation, not as a partisan, but as a friend.

Thus, there can be no manner of doubt as to President Wilson's state of mind at the outbreak of the war, none as to his policy, none as to the motives of his policy. He meant to keep the American people out of war (" neutrality ") ; and his main reason was his fear with regard to what he euphemistically called destruction of the " peace of mind " of his compatriots. His

method, as will be seen, was not to bring "peace of mind" nor any other form of peace; but meanwhile the President urged on American citizens physical, intellectual and moral restraint in regard to the war. This attitude is all the more striking as the President, in his neutrality proclamation *of August 4th*, had expressly stated that "the free and full expression of sympathies, in public and private, is not restricted by the laws of the United States." He even dangled before American citizens a bait. He appealed to their most characteristic sentiments, pointing out the attractions of that ideal privilege which, in all sincerity, he reminded them would be the reward of their prudent behaviour, if they took the best of care to tell nobody what they were thinking. He appealed to the humanitarian and Christian traditions and impulses of the idealistic American people, assuring them that later on they would have ample time for "the proper performance" of their duty, as being the one great nation at peace; they could then play their beautiful part of impartial mediation and "speak the counsels of peace and accommodation" (*sic*). "Counsels of accommodation!" The President knows his classics, and he is aware that there are always possible "accommodations" with Heaven. But, by the declaration just cited, he did whatsoever within him lay to prevent the American people from recalling that there are no legitimate "accommodations" with Hell, none with crime, even though the crime

be international. As the war proceeded, the American President was to learn many a lesson; he was even to learn this particular one. But meanwhile, having waited some two weeks after the outbreak of the war to determine the national conduct of the United States, and having neglected, as will be seen, to take for his country the statesmanlike attitude which, while safeguarding her privilege abroad, would have baffled in advance all the obstacles which he was so wantonly creating for himself and for the American people—meanwhile, he seemed to repeat the sayings: "Let the dead bury the dead," and "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Moreover, the date of the Presidential "Annual Message to Congress" was even now looming on the horizon. Rural credits, charting of the Alaska coastline, self-government for the Filipinos, the Mexican question were paramount matters in comparison with which the questions of the military preparedness of the United States and of the great World War might really be thrust into the background. As to that war, was not the only safe policy, perhaps, just what the President had defined it to be: an impartial attitude of present indifference, to be rewarded by ultimate mediation? It was, at all events, an apparently convenient policy, and, unquestionably, it was capable, in view of the peculiarities of American society, of plausible justifications.

The American people generally believed it to be the great good fortune of the United States

that, by grace of the Monroe Doctrine, it could balance on the "fine poise of undisturbed judgment," it could enjoy, as regards all European matters, the high and convenient privilege of neutrality. Why disabuse them? Infinitely small and distinguished was the minority that were aware that this opinion, so widely held, could no longer be safely cherished. But even that minority would not contest the "sacred egoism" of the President, the high political prudence of Mr. Wilson's reminder that political neutrality with regard to the war was, for the United States, natural, advisable and perhaps necessary. The domestic peace of the United States demanded it. Let, then, the "Annual Message" bloom as flowers bloom in halcyon climes. On December 8, 1914, while the Belgians and the French and the British were fighting the battles of Flanders, the newspapers of the United States contained the full text of the President's annual report to the American people on the state of the nation, and it was in calm and comforting terms that Mr. Wilson spoke of the United States of North America:—

We are at peace with all the world. No one who speaks counsel based on fact or drawn from a just and candid interpretation of realities can say that there is reason to fear that from any quarter our independence or the integrity of our territory is threatened. Dread of the power of any other nation we are incapable of. We are not jealous of rivalry in the fields of commerce or of any other peaceful achievement. We mean to live our own lives as we will; but we mean also to let

live. We are indeed a true friend to all the nations of the world, because we threaten none, covet the possessions of none, desire the overthrow of none. Our friendship can be accepted, and is accepted, without reservation, because it is offered in a spirit and for a purpose which no one need ever question or suspect. Therein lies our greatness. We are the champions of peace and of concord. And we should be very jealous of this distinction which we have sought to earn. Just now we should be particularly jealous of it, because it is our dearest present hope that this character and reputation may presently, in God's providence, bring us an opportunity such as has seldom been vouchsafed any nation: the opportunity to counsel and obtain peace in the world and reconciliation and a healing settlement of many a matter that has cooled and interrupted the friendship of nations. This is the time above all others when we should wish and resolve to keep our strength by self-possession, our influence by preserving our ancient principles of action.

Evidently the President was still cherishing in December his pious, inspiring and touching illusions of the first two weeks of the war. He had done nothing to affirm the indignation of the American people against Germany's outrageous violations of the law of nations. He had failed to "serve mankind" in the nick of time. He would serve it presently. He had the "dear present hope" that, "in God's providence," the United States would shortly enjoy an honour "such as has seldom been vouchsafed to any nation." He defined his supineness of the past months and of the present hour in the phrase: "preservation of our ancient principles of action." And meanwhile he would take careful note not

to forget to send William II. the customary birthday greeting. The watchword in England, too, even in England, was "Business as usual." The question presses: "Was this attitude of the President of the United States due to ignorance, or was it due to lack of character? Or was it an instance of incomparable statesmanship?"

The scrupulous scrutiny of the facts, of the documents in the case, can alone suggest an answer to these questions. But, meanwhile, it is of the highest importance to record and to note that, at one in the afternoon on August 6—four days after the invasion of Luxembourg by Germany, and some ten days after a British Admiralty order at midnight (July 26) forbidding the First Fleet, then concentrated at Portland, to "disperse for manœuvre leave for the present"—the United States Secretary of State instructed the United States ambassadors in Europe to inquire whether the several European Governments were willing to agree "that the laws of naval warfare as laid down by the Declaration of London of 1909 should be applicable to naval warfare during the present conflict in Europe"; and that the United States Government added that, in its opinion, such an agreement "would prevent grave misunderstandings which might arise as to the relations between neutral Powers and the belligerents." It is important to record and to note that, although sixteen days later Germany stated that she

would apply the Declaration of London, "provided its provisions were not disregarded by other belligerents," the United States Government, two months later (October 24), informed all the Foreign Offices of the belligerent Powers, save that of England, that its suggestion as to the adoption of a temporary code of naval warfare was withdrawn, "because some of the belligerents were unwilling to accept the Declaration without modifications." The United States Government therefore insisted "that the rights and duties of the Government and citizens of the United States in the present war be defined by existing rules of international law and the treaties of the United States," and the Government reserved to itself "the right to enter a protest or demand, in every case in which the rights and duties so defined were violated, or their free exercise interfered with by the authorities of the belligerent governments."

It was, then, true that Washington had taken certain precautions, and that these precautions, so far as they went, could be not inaccurately described by the phrase in the "Annual Message": "preservation of our ancient principles of action." But could the maintenance of a stray clause or two of the existing rules of international law, admirable as that purpose was as an ideal, be regarded as quite satisfying the President's claim to be "keeping American influence" by preserving the "ancient principles of action" of the American Government and the

American people? This was a question which was instantly put, not only by all Europeans, but by an immense number of United States citizens. It was a question which they who knew the facts as to the origins of the war, as well as they who knew the "ancient principles of action" of the United States of Washington and Madison and Jefferson, of Lincoln, of Cleveland, and of Root and Roosevelt, were bound to put. It is necessary to consider, therefore, with some detail, certain of the fundamental "ancient principles of action" characterising the tradition of the United States in international relations. It is necessary, at all events, to study the Doctrine of Monroe and the conventions of the Hague Conferences in connection with the problems with which Mr. Wilson was so inconveniently confronted in the autumn of 1914.

CHAPTER II

INCOMPETENT STEWARDSHIP

The Doctrine of Monroe and the War—The Hague Treaties and the War

WHEN Mr. Wilson, who is an historian of great learning, penned in his "Annual Message" to Congress the eloquent passage that has been cited, it is not unlikely that he recalled the immortal "Farewell Address" of Washington. Washington found himself in 1793 face to face with responsibilities and a problem singularly resembling those that confronted his successor of 1914. The young Republic of France had just declared war against Prussia and Austria, and the heroes of Valmy had prefigured the glories of the armies of the Third Republic in 1914 on the battlefields of the Marne. Europe was on the brink of a cataclysm all but equalling in magnitude that which we are now witnessing. Napoleon was in being, and the world was to be torn with war for more than twenty years. Washington made a deliberate examination of the situation, and on the 22nd of April, 1793, proclaimed the neutrality of the United States. That neutrality he maintained with moderation,

perseverance and firmness, and three years later, in the famous Message to our people known as his "Farewell Address," he made a remarkable apology of his action. "With me," he said, "a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes."

Thus Washington declared and maintained American neutrality in 1793 in order to further American unity, without which, in his view, it would be impossible for our country to secure command of its own fortunes. "Union" on Washington's lips meant no mere suppression of sectionalism, not merely the co-operation of North and South and East and West; it meant a really organic consensus of minds and hearts, making us worthy of the name of nation.

No one, indeed, ever dwelt more eloquently than Washington on the immense value of our national union for our collective and individual happiness. National union he called "the palladium of our political safety and prosperity." And when, in the same "Farewell Address," he said that the name of "American" "must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations"; when, addressing his countrymen, he said: "You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together; the indepen-

dence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes," he would have recoiled before the vision if he had foreseen the vast, heterogeneous American world of the twentieth century, in which the new, unassimilated millions of immigrants, who have not shared "the common dangers, sufferings and successes," are menacing that traditional moral unity which is the chief mark of nationality.

The truth is that the United States is, in certain altogether essential respects, less of a nation to-day than it was when Washington penned his famous political testament, or than it was even a quarter of a century ago. But while a host of alien influences have been corroding many of the most characteristic of our national traditions, the conditions on the European continent and even in Asia have been reviving there the spirit of nationalism; and we Americans, no longer isolated in our Western Hemisphere, are face to face with a host of problems which we fondly fancied we would never have to solve.

It was possible for Washington to declare in 1796 that Europe had a set of primary interests which have only a very remote relation to us, and that, therefore, it would be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of European politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities. But the globe has been

steadily shrinking, and it is no longer true, as it was 120 years ago, that, to use Washington's words, "our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course" from the nations of the European Continent. For our situation is no longer "detached and distant." We may already, if we like—that is, if we prepare ourselves properly—defy material injury from external annoyance; we may become strong enough, if we will, to secure scrupulous respect for any neutrality that we may resolve upon.

But in this modern world, whether we wish it or no, our destiny has become interwoven, not with that of any particular part of Europe, but with that of the whole of the planet, and we are no longer as much at liberty as once we were to steer completely clear of those permanent alliances which Washington so dreaded. Thus, Washington's "Farewell Address," like every other human document, from the Book of Genesis to the Pact of London of September 4, 1914, must be read in the light of the time, and the moment that gave it birth. Even less than a quarter of a century later Monroe and Madison and Jefferson found themselves face to face with an international situation with which they were able to deal only by ignoring completely the warnings of the Founder of the Republic as to the risks of entangling alliances.

But in the same breath in which Washington uttered counsels of prudence, the efficacy of which

the march of time was bound to modify, he gave expression to certain everlasting verities that times and seasons cannot alter.. "Constantly keep in view," he said, "that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favours from another"; and that there can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. "It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard."

What was Washington's conclusion? The necessity of what we to-day are calling "preparedness." He held that we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies if we take care always to keep ourselves by "suitable establishments" (Washington's expression for the naval and military forces of the country) "on a respectable defensive posture." The one object at which our national policy should aim, in Washington's view, was, in a word, to attain "command of our own fortunes."

But Washington had not been buried twenty years when the Force of Things, the development of world events, had intervened to impose on our statesmen a policy, for the "attainment of the command of our own fortunes," which rendered Washington's counsel as to temporary alliances obsolete. The remarkable triumvirate, Monroe, Madison and Jefferson, on whom had fallen the responsibility of keeping alight the vestal fires of our special American tradition, found themselves confronted with new problems to the

solution of which Washington's principle had ceased to apply. The world situation was now so altered that the interest of the United States demanded peculiar readjustments. The device of " temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies " no longer sufficed. The triumvirate of our great statesmen was compelled—driven by the Force of Things—to consider the advisability of a permanent alliance with one of those European Powers which our forefathers had hastily imagined to be governed by interests radically unlike those that would henceforth govern American men.

What was the fruit of their meditations? It was the famous decision and declaration known as the " Doctrine of Monroe." The Monroe Doctrine was, in reality, an alliance with Great Britain for the defence of the common security of our two States. It was, furthermore, an alliance inspired by a concern for the very same principles and ideals which France and England, Belgium and Serbia, Russia and now even Italy and Portugal—and may I not say Japan?—are so sublimely defending to-day, to their incomparable glory and honour.

At the outbreak of the War the vast preoccupied American public, as ignorant of European things as a Cantal peasant is ignorant of Chilian politics, could not be expected to understand the nature of the vital interests at stake in the World War; but the Washington Government had no excuse for ignorance.

It is an urgent duty at this moment of world crisis to draw attention to the great forgotten fact: of the identical inspiration of, say, Sir Edward Grey in 1914 and a Monroe in 1823; and in this connection it is impossible to forget the excellent words of President James Monroe in his Message to Congress of December 8, 1823: "The people being with us exclusively the Sovereign, it is indispensable that full information be laid before them on all important subjects, to enable them to exercise that high power with complete effect. . . . It is by such knowledge that *local prejudices and jealousies are surmounted, and that a* NATIONAL POLICY, *extending its fostering care and protection to all the great interests of our Union, is formed and steadily adhered to.*"

Every one has heard of the Bolivar idea which is expressed by the phrase, "America for the Americans," and is often confounded with the Monroe Doctrine. Now, any unbiassed reading of the famous Presidential Message of December 2, 1823, shows that the motives of the two American statesmen were wide as the Cordilleras asunder, but that the meaning of both Bolivar and Monroe was that European monarchical systems based on Divine Right must not be suffered to encroach on any portion of the Western Hemisphere. The claim and implication were that there was incompatibility between a certain traditional European conception of government and the American idea of government. The Monroe Doctrine, as well as the Bolivar idea, was

originally directed against a certain form of government, and it is a debatable question whether, in Monroe's mind, there was any thought of protecting the Latin American neighbours of the United States against the possible encroachment, should ever the case arise, of a Government, even European, that was really representative, and free from what Monroe regarded as the taint of the Powers of the Holy Alliance.

The essential point is that there was, as a matter of fact, no pretence of arresting an expansion westward of the world, or even, as a matter of fact, of one Hemisphere's saying, "Hands off!" to another Hemisphere. The whole point of President Monroe was that contact with a certain kind of "political system" peculiar to Europe might be dangerous to the United States, and could not be regarded with indifference. But, as time went on and the United States grew in power and increased her contacts with the European nations, American public opinion tended to give to the Message of President Monroe a bearing and a sense which easily appeared both absurd and intolerant. Written to deal with a certain occasion in world history, it was speedily given the monumental rigour of those laws of the Medes and Persians that have defied the ages because they were inscribed on brick or brass. It is true that President Monroe must be held to be partly responsible for this misinterpretation of his own thought. He himself said, in so many words,

that in negotiation with Russia with regard to the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the north-west coast of the North American Continent, he had seized the opportunity to lay it down as a principle that " the American Continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonisation by any European Power." The entire context as he continues, however, conclusively shows that what really concerned him was the possibility that, just as " the Allied Powers " had " interposed by force in the international concerns of Spain," they might be led to carry such " interposition " farther into the Continents of the Western Hemisphere, where circumstances were far from being the same; and it was against such " colonisation " as that, by such Powers as that, that the President protests in advance both on behalf of his countrymen and on behalf of " our Southern brethren."

In a letter written to Thomas Jefferson two days after the publication of the Message, the President says: " I consider the cause of South America essentially our own." This assurance was made in reply to a letter addressed by Jefferson from Monticello on October 24 to the President, in which Jefferson had said: " Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe, our second never to suffer Europe to intermeddle

with Cis-Atlantic affairs." It was thus Jefferson who, in this document, dictated to Monroe the idea that "America, North and South, has a State set of interests distinct from those of Europe and peculiarly her own," that, therefore, she should have a "system" of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. Jefferson's point, which became Monroe's point, was that Europe was bringing forth despotism, while America's object was to become a land of freedom.

But now comes the important point. How little either Jefferson or the President he inspired really wished, by such formal declarations as have historically become known as the Monroe Doctrine, to exclude from proper action in the Western Hemisphere Powers that were not despotic in their tendency, was clearly shown by Jefferson's subsequent remark: "Great Britain," he said, "is the nation which can do us the most harm of anyone, or all, on earth, and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. With her, then, we should the most sedulously cherish a cordial friendship; and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side by side in the same cause." Anything, in a word, to wreck or hamper the manœuvres of "the lawless Alliance calling itself Holy." To preserve England's friendship Jefferson forewent all his ambitions to round out the "measure of our political well-being" by the acquisition of Cuba, so that the United States might sign a declaration to the effect that she

had no aims for the possession of "any one or more of the Spanish provinces," but that she would oppose with all her means the forcible interposition of any other Power.

The action of Jefferson and Madison, therefore, is seen to be national and American, indeed, but not in such sense as crude idealism or a defective historical spirit and criticism have often ascribed to it. It was action for a definite purpose taken at a definite time. In putting forward the ideas adopted by the President Jefferson apologised even for the "haphazard" way in which he had had to express his views, although he expressed the hope that he had perhaps been "contributing his mite" towards something useful to his country. The increment of this "mite," indeed, after the grateful Monroe had placed it formally on interest in his Message, expanded so rapidly that the Monroe Doctrine to-day no longer bears any of the marks of contingency. It has become, owing partially, as has been seen, to a certain ambiguity in the President's phraseology, partially to the mere accretions of time, partially to the romantic consequences of America's geographical isolation, a great national American policy which, in spite of all its vagueness, Europe—Germany excepted—not only no longer calls in question, but positively desires to see religiously maintained for its own convenience.

But what constitutes the far-reaching significance for the world of 1916 of the unanimity

of Jefferson and Madison and Monroe is the fact already hinted at: the Monroe Doctrine laid down a common policy for Great Britain and the United States in their action in the Western Hemisphere in opposition to other Powers. The conscientious scrutiny of the documents, in fact, confirms the view of Sir Theodore Andrea Cook, who says[1]: "The Monroe Doctrine was clearly meant by its writer, with the concurrence of Madison and Jefferson, to lay down a combined policy which England and the United States were to follow on the Continent of America as against all other Powers—a policy which might just as well have been given out by England, but was announced from Washington, to avoid any appearance of dictation by the Mother Country." In other words, England was recognized by the United States as the defender with her of the idea of liberty, and the Monroe Doctrine was, in reality, the sign of a common resolve on the part of England and the United States to protect the Western Hemisphere against "autocratic aggression" and against the extension thither of a "system" which might entail the future colonization of America by certain European Powers that were regarded as undesirable. How little it has availed to achieve this latter end was revealed to the American world shortly after the outbreak of the Great War, when the attitude adopted by millions of men of German extraction,

[1] "The Original Intention of the 'Monroe Doctrine.'" *Fortnightly Review*, September 1898.

who had successfully "colonized" the United States, tended, as will be seen, to paralyze the free decisions of the head of the State, even rendering normal application of the Monroe Doctrine inapplicable.

The nature of the compact between the United States and England was clearly emphasized when, later on, by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty it was agreed that neither the United States nor Great Britain should have a preponderant control in Central America, and that any canal cut from sea to sea should be preserved for the use of all the world and its neutrality guaranteed by Great Britain and the United States. This Clayton-Bulwer Treaty and its consequences, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty relative to the Panama Canal, with the corollary concerning the question of the Panama tolls, show clearly enough, moreover, that Washington has never itself committed the extravagant heresy of supposing that it ever really meant to formulate—what the *Zeitgeist* working over the Monroe Doctrine has nevertheless produced—an indefensible principle of national policy, apparently excluding from the Western Hemisphere, at the *ipse dixit* of the United States, all and every intervention of whatever sort on the part of a foreign Power.

Thus, as Jefferson wrote to the President, was the "mighty weight" of England "brought into the scale of free government," and a "whole continent was emancipated at one stroke." The essence of the Monroe Doctrine, in a word, was—

to register a solemn protest against "the atrocious violation of the rights of nations by the interference of anyone in the internal affairs of another."

Thus, if the President of the United States had considered it convenient in 1914, at the outbreak of the World War, he might even have taken his stand on the Monroe Doctrine to protest against the violation by Germany of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg, and the shades of Jefferson and Madison and Monroe would have applauded. By failing to protest, President Wilson suffered the grandest of the American traditions to lapse. He was an incompetent steward of the most sacred interests of the American people. He lacked statesmanlike presence of mind. Some of the preoccupations that blinded him have already appeared on the surface of his mind, and have just been recorded. Others will became patent as this history proceeds.

But neglect to utilize the Monroe Doctrine, in the spirit of its admirable inspiration—neglect to apply it immediately to the insolent and flagrant crimes of Austria and Germany, thereby re-affirming American prestige in the counsels of Europe, while taking a positive stand in defence of those acquisitions of civilized humanity that are symbolized by the very word "America"—this neglect was not the only interesting lapse in the diplomacy of Washington in 1914. Washington left to rust in the Department of State arsenals other excellent instruments of action. Washington had signed, indeed, at the Hague

Conferences certain conventions which had suddenly, in 1914, the happiest occasion for instant use. These instruments, moreover, were just such weapons as a Monroe would have gladly utilized. The Monroe Doctrine formulated, *urbi et orbi*, the principle by which the United States meant to abide in its dealings with other Powers. It was a principle the vital importance of which for the United States had been illustrated by nearly one hundred years of history; and it was hardly less important for civilization and "humanity." It was the will-o'-the-wisp that had lured immigrants for a century over the sea to the Promised Land of the romantic New World. The essence of the Monroe Doctrine, as we have seen, was, in fact, to declare a solemn protest against "the atrocious violation of the rights of nations by the interference of anyone in the internal affairs of another." The interest of the Treaties of the Hague was that they provided the most opportune instruments for the reinoculation with this "American" essence of the body-politic of the world.

It was under the direction of Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, as President, that the United States signed the Hague Conventions, and that statesman has not allowed us to forget it.[1] Mr. Roosevelt has exactly the same pretext for expressing his righteous indignation against the failure of his successor to honour the signature of the

[1] See "America and the World War," by Theodore Roosevelt (Scribner), pp. 226–229.

United States as Mr. Venizelos, for instance, had to stigmatize his sovereign and his successors for breaking their faith with Serbia when Serbia was attacked by Bulgaria. Serbia and Greece had signed a solemn treaty of offensive and defensive alliance, which King Constantine treated on the Prussian "scrap of paper" principle. But who has the right to interpret the sense of a treaty if it be not the author thereof? Happily, as a matter of fact, no "interpretation" of the Hague Conventions is necessary. The text is exceptionally limpid, and it was concocted solely for just such occasions as the foolhardy leaders of Austro-Hungarian and German foreign policy provided as a test of its validity when they blackmailed Serbia and dashed across the Belgian frontier to the cry: "Necessity knows no law." The "Convention between the United States and other Powers respecting the rights and duties of neutral Powers and persons in case of war on land," which was signed at the Hague, October 18, 1907, which was ratified by the President of the United States, February 23, 1909, and proclaimed to the people of America by the President and Secretary of State, February 28, 1910, begins as follows:—

ARTICLE I.—The territory of neutral Powers is inviolable.

ARTICLE II.—Belligerents are forbidden to move across the territory of a neutral Power troops or convoys, either of munitions of war or supplies.

These articles received the sanction of the civilized

world, China and Nicaragua alone excepted. The German Chancellor, in his famous speech of August 4 in the Reichstag, acknowledged that Germany was infringing international law when she invaded Luxembourg and Belgium. By paragraph 2, Article VI. of the Constitution of the United States "all treaties made or which shall be made under the authority of the United States shall be the Supreme Law of the land." The President, to be sure, can make treaties "only by and with the advice of the Senate." But ratification of this particular treaty had been "advised" by the Senate, March 10, 1908. The Treaty of the Hague of 1907 was, therefore, a part of the Supreme Law of the land, and even if it appeared inconvenient to apply it, its application was obligatory. That it should not have been applied on such an astounding provocation as Germany's action when she bludgeoned Belgium, in order to deal a knock-out blow at France, and to browbeat the great British Liberal Party into cowardly neutrality—that, in fact, it should not have been waved in air by the knight-errant champions of all the American idealisms, the Bryanites, the pacificists and other humanitarians; that it should not, at all events, have been calmly submitted to one of its co-signatories, Germany, with a grave and stinging rebuke by the Chief Magistrate of the United States, the Constitutional High Priest charged with the safeguard of the Ark of the Covenant which contained that famous message of Monroe, worm-eaten in its coffer,

but now again offered the chance of glorious resuscitation; that, at such an hour, the American ship-of-State should have been left abandoned by the gods, with a bewildered pilot in the chart-room, is one of those ironic—though from the point of view of American interests, one of those tragic—facts of history which history must nevertheless record with as little emotion as possible, fully content if it eventually succeed in determining the causes and divining some of the consequences.

The American Government had acquiesced in the German treatment of Belgium. One of the makers of history, one of the competent statesmen of our time, ex-Secretary of State, Senator Elihu Root, delivered, on February 25, 1916, a dispassionate verdict on the conduct of that Government. It would not be easy to alter a word in the following solemn judgment: "The law protecting Belgium which was violated was our law and the law of every other civilized country. . . . Our interest in having it maintained as the law of nations was a substantial, valuable, permanent interest. . . . The invasion of Belgium was a breach of contract with us for the maintenance of a law of nations which was the protection of our peace, and the interest which sustained the contract justified an objection to its breach. There was no question here of interfering in the quarrels of Europe. We had a right to be neutral, and we are neutral as to the quarrel between Germany and France;

but when, as an incident to the prosecution of that quarrel, Germany broke the law which we were entitled to have preserved, and which she had agreed with us to preserve, we were entitled to be heard in the assertion of our own national right. . . . A single official expression by the Government of the United States, a single sentence denying assent and recording disapproval of what Germany did in Belgium, would have given to the people of America that leadership to which they were entitled in their earnest groping for the light. It would have ranged behind American leadership the conscience and morality of the neutral world. It would have brought to American diplomacy the respect and strength of loyalty to a great cause. But it was not to be. The American Government failed to rise to the demands of the great occasion. . . . Under a mistaken policy it shrank from speaking the truth. That vital error has carried into every effort of our diplomacy the weakness of a false position."

CHAPTER III

AMERICAN "NEUTRALITY"

The Reciprocal Misunderstanding of Two Continents—Immigration and the Unity of the United States—German Interference in the Affairs of the United States

THE President of the United States had failed to take the step permitting him to plant the American ensign on a commanding promontory visible from over the top of the sea. He had chosen, no doubt unwittingly—and, for the reasons which, as has been seen, he made no effort to conceal, and which must now be somewhat carefully analyzed—a long, perilous, roundabout route; he had adopted a policy of circuitous methods for the maintenance of American prestige.

Europe has its own notions of what the American flag stands for; and England and France, at all events, had long accepted the idea of that symbol which American statesmen and the large majority of American citizens themselves held. Germany, on the other hand, as Admiral Dewey knew at Manilla, has never beheld that flag unfurled on the high seas or at

the entrance of the American ports, or at the Kiel regattas, without regarding it as a challenge and being tempted to treat it with derision. Proclamation of American "neutrality," coupled with the inaction of Washington at the moment of Germany's brutal assault on public law, this was a spectacle for which neither France nor England was prepared, but which could in no wise surprise Germany. Germany, indeed, was bound to welcome it as a proof that she was about to reap the fruit of that intensive cultivation of the American soil which she had been so diligently sowing with seeds of dissension and rebellion during the last quarter of a century.

Among the Allies, who were fighting not only to defend their own soil against aggression, but also in defence of the liberties of Europe and of all those ideals of free government which the world had always associated with the name of America, there was profound disappointment, almost bitter disillusionment. No one expected the United States to declare war, actively to take sides. Everyone, on the other hand, was mystified by Washington's failure to seize the event, even if only in its own interests, to protest against the pretension of any Power to substitute Force for Right in international relations. Both France and England were aware that the steady flow of immigration to the United States during the last twenty-five years had strangely altered the character, as well as the aspect, of the great American community. But they had been opti-

mistically assured by Americans that the metamorphosis of the European soul under the pressure of the American atmosphere took place with an astounding rapidity. They believed—what is, speaking generally, quite true—that the specific signs of nationality, caste, profession, are obliterated by the hall-mark of "Americanism," and they saw no reason for believing that the United States had bartered her peculiar ideals and traditions for any mess of pottage composed of mulligatawny soup, sauer kraut or other *delicatessen*. Germany, as will be seen, had excellent reasons for thinking that she knew better. Germany had long perceived that American society was a vast field for the cuckoo forms of colonization by which she hopes to establish her economic, industrial, moral, even political, dominion throughout the world. But of this, when the war broke out, the American people had little inkling. They had never even heard of the ingenious device, the Delbrück law of July 22, 1913, by which the Germans who live in foreign countries—even the descendants of old German immigrants—could become naturalized citizens of those countries while still preserving their allegiance as German subjects. Washington, as has been seen, was better, slightly better, informed; but its knowledge had the sole result of inspiring the passionate appeal of the President to the American people to remain "impartial in thought as well as in action," so as to hold themselves "ready to . . . .

speak the counsels of peace and accommodation."

The attitude of the President was the signal for a grave misunderstanding between two continents. That such a misunderstanding could occur was in itself merely the proof of a latent reciprocal incomprehension which only a few observers had detected, and of which the sudden revelation now astonished both worlds. The United States, then, was not what Europe had supposed it to be. But was the United States what even the North Americans had fancied it was? At all events, Europe was more mysterious and incomprehensible, and far more different from America, than the Americans had supposed. Europe and the United States were two reciprocally repellent poles, and the chief interest of the action of the President was its startling suggestion of this verity.

The conduct of the Americans of the past had given the French and English of the present every reason for being mystified by what appeared to be the singular apathy of the American people and of their Government. The facts were patent. The American people, as a whole, were blandly unconscious of the fact that the Great War might ever be for them a possible occasion of active participation. Europe was for them another world, an Old World from which they had joyously cast adrift, a region where whatever happened was the legitimate and often curious object of study, but quite without integral relation to their own

concerns and interests. The War of Independence, the American Revolution, had been fought in order to procure to human beings on the American Continent the privilege of working out their individual and national salvation in their own way. None of the spasmodic, but widely separated, collisions of the peoples of the Western Hemisphere with the worlds of England and of Continental Europe had been of a sort to shatter the American pride in this rare privilege of a geographical isolation that warranted their enjoyment of an illusion as to the special character of their civilization. This illusion survived even the shock of the war with Spain, for that war seemed to be mainly a war waged for the introduction into the neighbouring American islands of Cuba of conceptions of life, of liberty, and of happiness that the American Declaration of Independence had formulated. That this particular war had involved the United States, at the Philippines, in Far Eastern complications, was, on the whole, a matter for regret, not for imperialistic jubilation; and, at all events, possession of the Philippines was an accident and could never be contemplated save in the light of the traditional American idea that Americans were the wardens of humanity. The average American regarded European events as interesting but quite without vital importance for the United States. And all that he knew of the one principle of international action, or inaction, to which his Government had officially subscribed, the

Monroe Doctrine, fully confirmed his natural ignorance and indifference with regard to the affairs of the effete worlds beyond the Atlantic.

There was, thus, a pathetico-comic and prodigious misunderstanding between the inhabitants of two halves of the planet. Never in the history of any State was a competent leader more urgently needed than in the United States of 1914.

But Washington was not the American people. Washington had traditions and was supposed to possess knowledge. However impressed and preoccupied by the fears as to the reaction which the war might have on the variegated social world of the United States, yet an instant's reflection should have suggested to the President that the very reasons he had given for suppression of thought and action were just the reasons that foresighted statesmanship would have adduced in justification of precautionary action of quite another kind, namely, the employment of those instruments which were being left to rust. It was just because the United States had become a community as to the moral and political character of which one could not be sure, that no time should be given anyone for enlarging the cracks in the edifice of the national unity; and for a statesman there was more than one way of utilizing the fact so conspicuously brought to light by the war—the fact that the United States was not a nation—for the construction of a larger unity, moral and political, than the

United States had ever dreamed of. The war was, indeed, revealing to the average man that the United States was not a nation, and Mr. Wilson had shown that this was the great fact that pre-occupied him as a political leader. But since the United States was not a nation, the aim of the President should have been to help to make it a nation. He had lost the best of opportunities of effecting this end. Matters must now take their course. Happily the President had cast one solid anchor to windward, his diplomatic round robin [1] of October 24, 1914, stating that he meant to defend international law on the high seas. If the war really continued, he would, at all events certainly be able to stick to that.

There can be no doubt whatever that the President had accurately determined what was bound to be the first state of mind of the average man throughout the length and breadth of the United States on learning of the improbable events in Europe. What did the average American man know of the causes of the horrible explosion? How could he believe any of the incredible accusations of which the Germans were the object? The motives attributed to

[1] "Round robin" by anticipation. The document in question bore the sole signature of the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, but the President at the time was deeply meditating his Pan-American policy, and cherished the hope that it would eventually turn out that he had spoken, too, for Latin America. See Chap. V.

them, the reports of their unheard-of methods of making war, were the inevitable, natural inventions of their enemies. Such crimes were not committed by the sort of people the Germans were well known to be. But that the American people were ill or well-informed, well or badly-led, was apparently no concern of Washington. All that Washington desired to know was what the American people thought, what the American people wanted. Over and over again, in his public utterances during the war, the President declared it to be his one preoccupation executively to carry out the wishes of the American people.

Technically, this attitude might be described as "plebiscitary diplomacy," application of the referendum to international business. It was an attempt to follow the line of least resistance in obedience to a happy divination of the average temper and prejudices of the American democracy. That was excellently Jeffersonian. It was government *of* the people *by* the people. But it remained to be seen whether it was worthy of the name of government *for* the people. What was obvious was that it was not the President who was "keeping the American people out of war"; it was they themselves who were opposing whatsoever might lead to war. And, as a matter of fact, far from furthering the desire of the American people not to become mixed up in the war, the Presidential hesitations at the outset, his failure to protest against Germany's breach of public law in Belgium, were bound to entail many risks

of unnecessary complications that might logically lead to war, and that might not be confined to the civil internecine disturbances which the President so much dreaded, but which, too, his action had only contributed to arouse.

The President's appeal to the American people on August 14 showed many things, but it showed above all that the Head of the State was keenly alive to the fact that immigration was a problem which, owing to the Great War, was about to assume an importance, political and national, and not merely economic. Before the war it was already sufficiently obvious to any observer with inductive habits of mind, and prone to cross-stanchioning his general conclusions, that—quite apart from the fact of the passage annually through the Imperial American turnstiles at Ellis Island of a million, more or less, of immigrants—such questions as the attitude of California or of Arizona in recklessly thwarting the trading rights of aliens, admitted to the privilege of citizenship under the general Federal laws of the land, were significant chiefly because they raised the supremely interesting problem of Inter-State Constitutional Relations in a community which even the Civil War between North and South had not completely unified. These questions led instantly to the much more important one as to how completely, after all, the United States had become a nation. That question, which the average preoccupied citizen of the United States rarely put to himself—owing

to the fact that the relatively few international contacts of his country permitted him to apply to the Californian and Arizona scandals the widespread American saw: "I should worry"—suddenly began to din itself into the ears of every real American when the Great European War of 1914 broke out; and it is to the credit of the President of the United States that he realized the fact, and issued a warning to the American people before the war was ten days old. The immediate echoes in the United States of the startling events in Europe were repeated with a dissonance that showed of what disquietingly heterogeneous elements the nation was composed. The vast spaces bounded by the Canadian frontier, the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific, this unique Imperial refuge for the oppressed or the adventuresome of older worlds, was seen to be inhabited by an agglomeration of races and peoples less reciprocally assimilated than any citizen of the United States would have cared to admit. The famous melting-pot of nations was seen, after all, to be full of unamalgamated scoriæ. The spectacle even suggested doubt as to whether these scoriæ were amalgamable. The situation was one of such gravity as to make it seem prudent for the Head of the State to justify recommendations of national neutrality by arguments which were a confession of the small degree of nationality as yet attained by the nondescript population of the Republic. This all but tyrannical veto, on the part of the

head of his country, not only of all debate, but positively of all thinking, on matters connected with the origins and responsibilities of the war was an action unparalleled in the history of the world. The occasion was one when it would have been natural for the noblest, most traditional idealism to take sides with the Champions of Right against Arbitrary Power. That the Presidential cry was warranted by the peculiar gravity, and the grave peculiarity, of the circumstances many a sociologist will no doubt readily acknowledge. For the fact should be noted that neither Rome, nor Madrid, nor Stockholm, nor Copenhagen, nor yet any other capital of any reasonably homogeneous national community—not even Monaco—witnessed the signature of any such peculiar declaration of neutrality as Washington beheld. And if this be so, it is because neither Italy nor Spain, neither Sweden nor Denmark, found so special a kind of self-protecting, self-sacrificing ordinance imperative. That is to say, the Great War brought home to the United States the unique character of its attempt to make a nation in ways that nations have never yet been formed; and the terms of the President's appeal for neutrality of so peculiar a sort declared not less startlingly to the world that the United States had not yet worked out its national salvation, that it was not yet a nation.

It is, indeed, worth while insisting, in this connection, on the point that, once having been

a nation, the United States was now merely "The Land where Hatred Expires."[1]

The gradually accelerated movement in the centralization of Government, which began with the Civil War, and which the legal mind is, no doubt, bound to deplore as reckless and dangerous Federal usurpation,[2] is a sign of the maturing birth-travail of the North-American Republic as a homogeneous nation. For instance, it became convenient for the population of this vast community to have Government legal-tender notes, to possess a national banking system, and, finally, to adopt a protective tariff; then to interfere with the internal affairs of this or that State by the power to regulate commerce. The United States Supreme Court, the venerated interpreter of the Constitution, unfailingly registered the approval by the vast majority of the people of these devices for improving, even at the cost of a certain doctrinaire "liberty," and of certain "State rights," the mechanism of

[1] The title of a very eloquent and invaluable document illustrating the most ideal aspirations of the American spirit, a lecture by the Professor of the History of French Culture at the Rice Institute, Houston, Texas, in which the author, a Frenchman, only ten years resident in the United States, Mr. Albert Léon Guérard, gives his touching and admirable reasons why "the newcomers, the immigrants, are at heart the true Americans." (Publications of the American Association for International Conciliation, No. 98.)

[2] See a characteristic case, Mr. Franklin Pierce's "Federal Usurpation." Appleton, 1908.

social relations in a community bent on securing business efficiency even in national affairs. That this tendency might be making towards State Socialism seemed in no wise to disquiet the masses of the people, nor yet their leaders, although when the project of a Federal-owned merchant marine was championed by President Wilson, the Senatorial leaders of the Opposition reflected the conservative anxieties of the more responsible organs of public opinion, of the competent specialists in the shipping world, and, indeed, of the business world in general, in protesting against a measure which, whatever else might be said of it, was, at all events, a long step on the way to Socialistic centralization. These protests were treated in a spirit almost Napoleonic of plebiscitary demagogism by the Head of the State, who, speaking on January 8, 1915, at Indianapolis, not only remarked: "I have to say to editors of great newspapers that I never take my opinion of the American people from their editorials," but even, with a sneer that betrayed how little the United States Executive is concerned with the ideal of the preservation of Representative Government in the Western Hemisphere, described his Senatorial opponents as follows: "Some of them are misguided; some of them are blind; most of them are ignorant. I would rather pray for them than abuse them." As the war proceeded, the President, by direct interference in the liberty of editorial utterance, was to dictate surreptitiously to the American

people the opinions which he thought it prudent for them to hold. These were Bismarckian methods, altogether foreign to American traditions and disruptive of the American form of Democracy. They were, however, merely the secret prolongation of the curious weekly colloquies at the White House with the representatives of the American and foreign press. On the occasion when I myself assisted at one of these scenes, I watched, with a certain ironic admiration, the perfection of the working of this simple and ingenious device for canalizing all free thought and all independent criticism of the Administration. By this method, the President sought to impress the American mind, more indelibly than by the Prussian system, with the stamp of his own hall-mark.

So prone is collective human nature in democratic communities to have its work done for it by a man willing, as was Louis Napoleon, to pass himself off, or to allow himself to be put forward, as efficient that the reckless demagogic note of these utterances, instead of arousing indignation, was received without dismay. This is the result, familiar to historians, of an appeal to the "people"—to Number, over the heads of the representatives of the people. It has as its corollary—and the consequence has never failed at any moment of history—the utterly un-American destruction of the idea of liberty, individual right, and, indeed, of all the guarantees which British citizens, for instance, had been

proudest of in their slow organization of the democracy until, by the rapid evolution towards single-chamber tyranny, they, too, all but secured a method of government no less subversive of individual right than is the bestowing of virtually uncheckable power upon the Presidential Executive at Washington.

The rapid development of executive authority in the United States of North America cannot be too strongly insisted upon, but it must be noted that, as a phenomenon, it is the very opposite of those phenomena of so-called "federal usurpations" which are organizing the democracy for national ends. "Executive usurpation" is imperilling many of the most characteristic interests of the nation, though it undoubtedly offers in certain cases such guarantees of efficient action as no representative Parliamentary system of government can give. The multiple proofs of the rapid grafting of Napoleonic plebiscitary demogogic ideas upon the Constitution of the United States mark a tendency towards one-man domination, the like of which exists nowhere else in the world at the present hour. Whether this be an excellent or scandalous state of things is not so interesting a question as is the inquiry what is likely to come of it. The success of Mr. Roosevelt in utilizing the Constitution for the aggrandizement of the Executive authority—the encroachment of that authority upon the other functions of the Government—has been far outstripped by Mr. Wilson's achievements in the

same direction. The parallel stops there, however. Mr. Roosevelt utilized the Executive authority mainly to enhance the national prestige in international relations. Mr. Wilson was chiefly concerned in administering, by the instrument of a perfectly disciplined political party, the internal affairs of the United States. He sought to respond to what he believed to be the prejudices and the points of view of the masses of the people, and his own interpretation of their feelings was what he conscientiously sought to convert into statute law. His two remarkable measures of constructive statesmanship, reform of the tariff and the Federal Bank law, whatever their merits or defects, had little significance as regards the International policy of the United States, a matter to which he attended only under pressure.

The Great War that so suddenly burst out in Europe had, then, this advantage, at all events, for the United States: it forced upon President and people the obligation to consider questions of national prestige. It compelled American citizens to reflect on the problem of their relation with citizens of other countries and on the nature of international business.

The German Foreign Office, and paid German agents on American soil, were happily to facilitate American meditations on these matters in a way that even the most sanguine American patriot could hardly hope for, and that even the best-informed student of Pan-German methods

could hardly anticipate. The history of German efforts, subtle and gross, to deform American opinion, the insolence of the German machinations to intimidate American public men, American bankers, the American Government, might well form the theme of an entire book.[1] For the purposes of the present discussion their detailed chronicling is unimportant. What is important is to note that the whole strange record became cumulatively an object-lesson for the instruction of the American public, and that, at the same time, the American public awoke, with its President, not only to the fact that the Germans were the Germans, that the classical method of German diplomatic action is bluff, that Pan-Germanism is an asphyxiating gas for all the ideals of the civilized peoples—truths already long known in Europe—but also to the facts, far more important to the American people, that the United States might perhaps be a peculiar nation, but that, at all events, it must be a real nation or succumb, and that military preparedness is unfortunately one of the inevitable necessary means to that end. The very President who, in 1914 and 1915, was still talking of mediation and of the peaceful idealism of the United States, was, in the winter of 1916, during a whirlwind tour of the Middle West, to make frantic appeals to the bad faith

[1] It already has formed the theme of an entire book, and the book is an excellent one: "German Conspiracies in America," by William H. Skaggs, with an Introduction by Theodore Andrea Cook. T. Fisher Unwin, 1916.

of the so-called "hyphenated" population of German-Americans, and to the guileless apathy of the average American man, to realize that the United States was not, after all, a community that has developed on some distant Atlantis isolated from all international contacts, and that the country might, in spite of all its efforts, be dragged into war. The man who, on the fourth day after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, had declared, in a public speech in Philadelphia, that "a man may be too proud to fight," was to make in Chicago, one of the largest German cities in the world, on the last day of January, 1916, a confession of singular significance:—

> It is not a happy circumstance to have these tense moments of national necessity arise, and yet I for my part am not sorry that this necessity has arisen. It has awakened me myself, I frankly confess to you, to many things and many conditions which a year ago I did not realize. It may be that large bodies of our fellow-citizens were resting in a false security based on an imaginary correspondence of all the world with the conceptions under which they were themselves conducting their own lives. It is probably a fortunate circumstance, therefore, that America has been cried awake by these voices of the disturbed and reddened night, when fire sweeps sullenly from continent to continent, and it may be that in this red flame of light there will rise again that ideal figure of America holding up her hand of hope and of guidance to the people of the world.

It had depended solely upon the President of the Republic, as has been seen, to help that "ideal figure of America" of which Mr. Wilson

spoke in Chicago, to "hold up her hand of hope and of guidance," side by side with the ideal figures of Serbia, of Belgium, and of Belgium's allies at the outset of the war. But, as the President confessed so frankly, he was then sleeping, he was not then "awake to many things and many conditions" which a year of dire experience had revealed to him as well as to the people of America. "A year ago," he said apologetically, "it did seem as if America might rest secure without any great anxiety, and take it for granted that she would not be drawn into the maelstrom;" but now things had got to such a pass that American citizens might any day be "called upon to stand behind the President in order to maintain the honour of the United States." In April, 1915, in the mid-period of the era of the Presidential illusions, long before the *amende honorable* of Chicago, Mr. Wilson was still cherishing the following ingenious ideas:—

> We are the mediating nation of the world. I do not mean that we undertake not to mind our own business and to mediate where other people are quarrelling. I mean the word in a broader sense. We are compounded of the nations of the world. We mediate their blood, we mediate their traditions, we mediate their sentiments, their tastes, their passions; we are ourselves compounded of those things.
>
> We are therefore able to understand all nations; we are able to understand them in the compound, not separately, as partisans, but unitedly, as knowing and comprehending and embodying them all. It is in that sense that I mean that America is a mediating

nation. The opinion of America, the action of America, is ready to turn and free to turn in any direction.

Did you ever reflect upon how almost all other nations, almost every other nation, has through long centuries been headed in one direction? That is not true of the United States. The United States has no racial momentum. It has no history back of it which makes it run all its energies and all its ambitions in one particular direction, and America is particularly free in this, that she has no hampering ambitions as a World Power.

If we have been obliged by circumstances, or have considered ourselves obliged by circumstances, in the past to take territory which we otherwise would not have thought of taking, I believe I am right in saying that we would have considered it our duty to administer that territory not for ourselves, but for the people living in it, and to put this burden upon our consciences, not to think that this thing is ours for our use, but to regard ourselves as trustees of the great business for those to whom it does really belong—trustees ready to hand over the cosmic trust at any time, when the business seems to make that possible and feasible.

That the United States enjoyed the privilege of a "cosmic trust," as the President so superbly claimed, was perhaps an excessive pretension—the average American might characteristically have dubbed it a "long order"—but in Europe, at all events, one people only, the Germans, had any thought of gainsaying it, and it was just because the American people had been so long in coming round to a right notion of its admitted birthright that there had been such surprise throughout the world, and such temporary loss of American prestige. A little more than six

months were to pass in the still prolonged din of war, with sinking merchantmen, with astounding conspiracies on American soil, and the President, now almost completely "awake to the many things and the many conditions" to which he alluded in Chicago, was to insert in his "Annual Message" a really startling passage:—

I have in mind no thought of any immediate or particular danger arising out of our relations with other nations. We are at peace with all nations in the world, and there is reason to hope that no question in controversy between this and other Governments will lead to any serious breach in amicable relations. Grave as some differences of attitude and policy have been and may yet turn out to be, I am sorry to say that the gravest threats against our national peace and safety have been uttered within our own borders. There are citizens of the United States, I blush to admit, born under other flags, but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to full freedom of opportunity in America, who have poured poison and disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life, and who have sought to bring the authority and good name of our Government into contempt, to destroy our industries, wherever they thought it effective for their vindictive purpose to strike at them, and to debase our policies to the uses of foreign intrigue. Their number is not great as compared with the whole number of those sturdy hosts by which our nation has been enriched in recent generations out of virile foreign stocks, but it is great enough to have brought deep disgrace upon us and to have made it necessary that we should promptly make use of the processes of law whereby they may be purged of their corrupt distempers.

America has never witnessed anything like this before, and never dreamed it possible that men sworn

into her citizenship, men drawn out of the great free stocks, such as have supplied some of the best and strongest elements of that little but now heroic nation that in the high day of old staked its very life to free itself from every entanglement that had darkened the fortunes of older nations, and set up a new standard here, that men of such origins and such free choice of allegiance would ever turn in malign reaction against the Government and the people who had welcomed and nurtured them, and seek to make this proud country once more a hotbed of European passion. A little while ago such a thing would have seemed incredible. We made no preparation for such a contingency. We would have been almost ashamed to prepare for it, as if we were suspicious of ourselves and of our own comrades and neighbours.

But the ugly and incredible thing actually has come about, and we are without adequate Federal laws to deal with it. I urge you to enact such laws at the earliest possible moment, and I feel that in doing so I am urging you to do nothing less than to save the honour and self-respect of the nation. Such creatures of passion, disloyalty and anarchy must be crushed out. They are not many, but they are infinitely malignant, and the hand of our power should close over them at once. They have formed plots to destroy property, they have entered into conspiracies against the neutrality of the Government, and they have sought to pry into every confidential transaction of the Government in order to serve interests alien to our own.

The passage is, indeed, remarkable. It absolutely reflects the average American sense of bewilderment on awakening from the fool's paradise in which almost all Americans had lived for a generation, and from which they were being hunted by the bursting shells of the Great

War. "We made no preparation for such a contingency. We would have been almost ashamed to prepare for it, as if we were suspicious of ourselves and our own comrades and neighbours." This was the exact truth, the naive and the naked truth. But it was only part of the truth.

Ordinary knowledge of European affairs made it plain that the war was begun not by accident, but with purpose which would not soon be relinquished. Ordinary knowledge of military events made it plain from the moment when the tide of German invasion turned from the battle of the Marne that the conflict was certain to be long and desperate. Ordinary knowledge of history—of our own history during the Napoleonic Wars—made it plain that in that conflict neutral rights would be worthless unless powerfully maintained. All the world had fair notice that, as against the desperate belligerent resolve to conquer, the law of nations and the law of humanity interposed no effective barriers for the protection of neutral rights. Ordinary practical sense in the conduct of affairs demanded that such steps should be taken that behind the peaceable assertion of our country's rights, its independence and its honour, should stand power, manifest and available, warning the whole world that it would cost too much to press aggression too far. The Democratic Government at Washington did not see it. Others saw it and their opinions found voice.[1]

This "ordinary knowledge" was lacking, however, in Washington, yet German methods ought to have been well known there. It was,

[1] Speech of Elihu Root at the New York Republican Convention, February 15, 1916.

no doubt, too much to expect[1] that the warnings of the small minority of competent observers

[1] The present writer expected nothing of the kind. His "Problems of Power," the first edition of which appeared in the springtime of 1913, contained dozens of passages like the following:—

"Fortunately—or unfortunately, as it may be regarded—the United States has no choice. By the mere fact of deciding to construct a canal at Panama it crossed the Rubicon, took the step from which there is no going back, and definitely sealed the destiny opened for it in 1898, when it drove Spain out of Cuba. At any moment during the years succeeding the Spanish-American War, even after its grave decision virtually to annex the Philippines, at any moment previous to the glorious and fatal resolution to build the Panama Canal, it might have undone the consequences of its past, thwarted its destiny, and remained isolated from the European and Asiatic worlds, a self-sufficient mistress of half the North-American Continent, and Protector and Overlord of Latin America. The Panama Canal has changed all that. The United States is now out in the open. It is shortly to be swept into the centre of the world's currents and counter-currents, and it must learn to trim its sails to the winds against which the other Powers are tacking, and to look out for the pirate fleets of its rivals. . . . A strong American Navy has become a vital necessity for the security of the United States. America has courted a great responsibility, and she must rise to it, or pay the consequences by dismemberment.

". . . Nothing is more obvious than that now at last the United States, having issued from its isolation, having become sooner than it expected, perhaps sooner than it wished, a responsible, and no mere dilettante member of the concert of nations, will be called on by those nations, driven, that is, by the

would result in any more efficient action in the United States than did, in England, the *delenda est Carthago* of Lord Roberts or of Leo Maxse. But Washington was expected to keep vigilant guard over the interests of the American people. Had all the precedents and traditions accumulated in the bureaux of the Secretary of State been suddenly obliterated by the great political upheaval that had substituted, a few years before, the Democratic party for the party that had so long held office? Was there no one there who recalled that, though Frederick II., as Bismarck was never tired of reminding the North Americans,

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Force of Things, to conform its favourite principle of the Monroe Doctrine to the Law of Nations. No spasmodic, provisional, merely empirically › opportunist re-adjustment of that Doctrine to this or that new need or situation, as they may arise, will any longer be tolerated. The attempt to defer the complete solution of this grave problem by arousing waves of enthusiasm in favour of Hague Conferences, unrestricted Arbitration Treaties, or any other desirable and elevated form of the humanitarian and Christian ideal of Pacificism, will be regarded as hypocritical, and may even suggest the cuttle-fish policy of spurting forth an inky channel to cover its escape from its pursuers. Meanwhile the most elementary attempt to preserve the essence of its great national 'Doctrine,' while introducing it into the recognized *corpus* of International Law, will prove to the United States the wisdom of becoming as speedily as possible a strong naval and military Power. The same self-interest will suggest the parallel prudence of not doing anything to alienate the vast Imperial Community of men of its own flesh and blood, who, previously separated from it by an estranging sea, have

was the first ruler to recognize the independence of England's American colonies, the same Bismarck secretly sought to "antagonize American policy," publishing in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* a violent article against the Monroe Doctrine, which he called "an incredible impertinence to the rest of the world"? This was in 1896, before similar pretensions to hegemony on the European Continent became the ideal of Prussian policy. Germany and the United States had already quarrelled in 1888 over the Samoan Islands, and ten years later, at the moment of the Spanish-American War, Washington discovered that, but for England's support and the sympathy of France—in the spirit of the Canning attitude of

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now become its close neighbours, and even a possible menace to its insufficiently protected borders. If, from failure to divine the inevitable drift of the time, to distinguish clearly the character of the forces to which it must conform, the United States, repudiating its idealistic past, were to suffer serious friction to be set up along the new frontiers now uniting it to, instead of dividing it from, the British Empire; if it were to let the problems created by the Panama Canal engender between it and England, Canada and Australia, such ill-feeling as would prepare the diplomatic ground at Washington for the signing of an *Entente* between Berlin and Washington for their common defence against British and Russo-Japanese competition, both military and commercial—should it drift unto such a situation, it would have to bear the responsibility of an act which would upset the entire balance of power in Europe, and result in a war involving the interests of the entire population of our planet."

1823—Europe under Germany's lead might have succeeded in creating a fresh Holy Alliance Coalition against the United States. Everyone recalls the incident between Admirals Dewey and Diedrichs in the Philippines. Again, in 1901, the joint intervention of England, Germany and Italy in Venezuela, ostensibly in defence of purely economic interests, was seen, as Mr. Coolidge puts it, to be an effort of Germany to test the Monroe Doctrine. For greater security she had persuaded the other two Powers to join her. It was the familiar German way, the way I have had occasion so often to indicate in my analysis of her dealings with the Powers, her habit of getting other nations to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for her.[1]

Had the State Department at Washington completely forgotten these evidences of Germany's persistent effort to drive a wedge of reciprocal distrust and hatred between England and the United States? Had Washington ever read—or if Washington had read it, did it read it with the detachment that it would have read "The Last of the Mohicans" or "Gil Blas"?—the little book published at Leipzig in 1907 by one Emil Witte, entitled "Experiences at a German Embassy: Ten Years of German-American Diplomacy"? Herr Witte, who, in 1898, was an editor of the *Deutsche Zeitung* in Vienna, paid out of the Secret Service funds, under the

[1] *Cf.* "Germany's Policy towards the United States," by Fabricius. (*Fortnightly Review*, January, 1915.)

admirable Bismarckian reptile press system, began his duties at Washington in January, 1899, his instructions being to silence the anti-German press and to arouse hatred of England. If Washington had perused his book it would have discovered not merely useful information as to the excellent espionage activities of certain German professors, but it would have fallen upon such suggestive remarks as this: "Americans swallow any bait greedily so long as it is . . . placed before them with a friendly smile." It would have learned that Germany sent Prince Henry of Hohenzollern to the United States to spy out the land, and that, in his report to his Imperial brother, Prince Henry confirmed the views of Herr von Holleben, the German Ambassador, to the effect that one-third of the population of the United States was of German descent or birth, and that a war between Germany and the United States would assume the character of a civil war. If Washington had read the curious revelations in this book —curious revelations, yet commonplace enough to all serious students of international affairs— it would have seen why Germany, after having for so long despised as renegades the exiled Germans in America, suddenly invented a diabolically ingenious legislative device permitting them to become naturalized American citizens while remaining German subjects and German soldiers, mobilizable for every form of Pan-German action on North American, as well as

South American, or British, French, Russian or other hospitable soil. And Washington would have learned as well, long before the sinister object-lessons of 1916, that German action not merely synchronized, but was co-ordinable, with the Fenian activities of certain Irish organizations that were conspiring on American soil against the unity of the British Empire. Had no one in Washington paid attention, for instance, to the characteristic remarks of a Michael Davitt, on the 14th of May, 1898, just after Mr. Chamberlain had delivered his famous speech suggesting an Anglo-Saxon Alliance? With jubilant irony the terrible Irish leader reminded the readers of the *Times* that the advocates of an Anglo-Saxon Alliance "ignored the patent fact that the United States at the present moment are less 'Anglo-Saxon' in their population than even Ireland." He adduced figures. He took the population of the United States as 70,000,000, and he divided them as follows: Irish, 16,000,000; Teutonic race (including Germans, Dutch and Austrians), 14,000,000; British (English, Scotch and Welsh), 13,000,000; Huns, Slavs and Jews (Polish, Hungarian, Russian, etc.), 7,000,000; coloured races, 7,000,000; French (including emigrants from Lower Canada), 5,000,000; Scandinavians, 3,000,000; Italians, 2,000,000; Portuguese, Spanish and other Continental races (including Jews), 3,000,000. "What were known," added Mr. Michael Davitt, "as the 'New England' States a generation ago are now peopled

by a majority of the Irish race"; and it was not necessary to belong to what Oliver Wendell Holmes called the "blue-blood" of Boston's Beacon Hill to be deeply impressed, even in 1898, by this verity. What were Mr. Michael Davitt's conclusions? They may be summed up in the single one that an Anglo-Saxon Alliance was a dream. "All talk about the 'Motherland' being in trouble, and about 'blood being thicker than water' is interesting," he said, "if we ignore the figures and facts, which knock these sentimental fictions into racial smithereens." And he added, with a lively prophetic plausibility: "Any administration in America which would venture upon any such alliance as that so eloquently and pathetically pleaded for by Mr. Chamberlain last night would not get a sanction for it from a United States Senate. Such a sanction would destroy any party, Republican or Democratic, to which a majority of assenting Senators might belong. Every Irish, every German, every French voter in the States would 'go for' the party that could thus give to England such an enormous advantage over her rivals without any compensating reward for America."

The time was to come when the excessive development of the state of things so curiously analyzed by the Irish leader was to bring with it logically the suggestion of a "compensating reward," possibly inherent in the adoption of the very solution, an Anglo-Saxon Alliance, which, in 1898, seemed absurd. German pacific pene-

tration, Irish "Sinn Feinism," were to bring forth their astringent fruit. It was rare good fortune for the American people, since nothing else—not even South American proximity, nor the problems of the Caribbean, nor the opening of the Panama Canal, nor the spectacle of overflowing immigration, nor the collisions with Japan—could open their eyes to the rapid advance of the fated hours when they must alter their conception of all the American values—it was rare good fortune for the American people that an event like the great World War should suddenly force them to reflect on the problems of their place in the world, on the "promise of American life," on their destiny as a nation, and, indeed, on the question whether they were really a nation at all. But it will be recorded as a remarkable fact of American history that at the moment when the American people was most in need of guidance it was obliged to work out its own salvation without adequate leadership.

How grave the moment was, and is, the facts already cited have amply illustrated. The following anecdote is a picturesque confirmation of William II.'s insidious aims as regards the national integrity of the United States, and the impudent machinations of the German Government for the destruction of our unity as a nation.[1]

[1] I communicated these utterances of the Emperor to the *New York World*, which published them on May 21st, 1916.

In July, 1901, a small party of French ladies and gentlemen, including the Duc de B——, the Comtesse de S—— F——, Monsieur de Saint-André, Comte de Martimprey and Comte Gaston de Ségur, were entertained at dinner by William II. on board the imperial yacht *Hohenzollern*, then anchored in a Norwegian fjord at Odde. During the evening the Emperor touched agreeably upon a hundred themes. He talked with remarkable frankness, and was particularly interesting and outspoken in conversation with my friend, Monsieur de Saint-André, who has placed his notes of the Emperor's confidences at my disposal. For fifteen years he had refrained from publishing them, although one of the Emperor's guests, Monsieur de Ségur, had published, a short time after the dinner, an article reporting certain of the Emperor's opinions. To-day no consideration of social convention, or of tact, obliges any one of the Emperor's interlocutors to silence, and I am authorized by Monsieur de Saint-André to make whatever use I think best of his report of the Emperor's talk.

Here are the notes, verbatim, as they were taken down immediately after the conversation:

"The Americans. The vital question for the future of Europe and the world. It takes precedence of all others, leaving in the shadow divergencies that are merely European. Their (the Americans') interference (*immixtion*) in European affairs is nearer at hand, more menacing, than is generally supposed. The idea of a European

Zollverein will become imperative; it is to be hoped that this will take place as soon as possible. This is an opinion which the Emperor declares he has had for some considerable time, and he says that the only man who had looked at the matter in the same way in advance was Jules Ferry. . . . The attitude of England towards America. The insistent expressions of her sympathy are especially due to fear. She wishes to arouse difficulties between the United States and the other Powers, so as to avoid having any of her own. The question of the Samoan Islands, which the Emperor is very glad finally to see settled. How difficult it all was, and that he was so mortified at not being able earlier in the day to make his voice more loudly heard. But he could not do so owing to his lack of a naval force. Prince Bismarck has taught him that when you have merely a stick as a weapon, you must not attack a man with a gun. Every question or difficulty of a European Power with the United States becomes a European question, a European difficulty, a European interest. The attitude of England, therefore, will have to become clear and frank. She will have to take sides. Anglo-American sympathy, is it sincere? Desirous of finding out, the Emperor at the funeral of 'Grandmamma' (*sic*) asked *a very considerable personage* for his opinion—he is obliged to withhold the name. To the question thus put the reply was: 'Those who look behind the scenes do not believe in it!' The danger is that there is no

counterpoise to the United States in America. His regrets that France, instead of going to Mexico in '66, should not have come materially to the rescue of the Confederate troops. While the struggle between the Northern States and the Southern States is over for ever, it might perhaps be possible to look forward to a rivalry, perhaps to a conflict, between the East and the West, between the agricultural population and the manufacturing population."

These utterances need no comment.

CHAPTER IV

Action of the Government of the United States

The Submarine Controversy—Collision between the President and Congress—A Political Victory and a "Diplomatic Victory"

THE foregoing chapter has put before the reader a rapid, and no doubt incomplete, but, for the purposes in hand, a perhaps adequate, survey of the "many things and the many conditions" which were bound to confront the American people and American statesmen, above all their President, in case of the outbreak of a general war in Europe at any time during the latter half of the first decade of the twentieth century.

The survey, however, is incomplete, for no allusion has been made in it to what may be called the psychologic tricks of Prussian diplomacy, the methods of the German Government in its dealings with other States, as they had been revealed even to the average man in Europe at the moment of the famous "Coup d'Agadir." Yet these "psychologic tricks," these "methods"

were an essential part of the problem of the world-situation which no student of international politics had any right to ignore. Nearly the whole of Europe (certain British politicians excepted) had gradually come to understand, for instance, what were the most effective retorts for German intimidation and bluff. And as the whole of Europe that was not Prussianized had had to open its eyes to a truth which it had hoped against hope it need not accept—the truth that Germany was preparing a ruthless, world-wide, aggressive war against three absolutely pacific peoples, the French, the Russians and the British—Europe had gone, in perspicacity and knowledge of international things, leagues beyond the inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere. This Western World was obviously quite unready to cope with situations such as Germany was planning to spring upon it. It was, therefore, all the more necessary that its responsible leaders should be capable, both in character and intelligence, of comprehending in advance the "many things and many conditions" which the President of the United States, as he admitted, did not come "to realize" until eighteen months after the ultimatum to Serbia, the burning of Louvain, and the invasion of France—and even then, alas, only temporarily.

But, however accurate and extended the knowledge which the American people were warranted in demanding of their Government at the outset of the war, they could not expect

Washington to be able to foresee the trend of events on the high seas. Washington, however, had a right to believe—it was bound, at least, to make a show of believing—that, inasmuch as Germany had replied so speedily and so favourably to its Note of August 6, 1914, with regard to respecting the Declaration of London as to Naval Warfare, that Power would make no breach of international law tending to involve the United States in the war. In any case, Washington had taken in good time the proper precautions for defending American interests as a "neutral." When, therefore, on February 4, 1915, Germany despatched a famous memorandum to the Neutral Powers declaring as a "war-zone" all the waters surrounding Great Britain and Ireland, the English Channel included, and warning the Neutral Powers against the risks that their shipping would run in those waters, American public opinion held its breath on learning of this German pretension to initiate an unprecedented form of naval warfare, and awaited with anxious curiosity the reply of its Department of State. Admiral Tirpitz thus inaugurated that form of self-defence which Herr Maximilian Harden, canniest of the German journalists, was to describe in the *Zukunft* in April, 1916, when the German game was seen even by the Germans to be "up," as a "surreptitious war against the defenceless."

As yet no American merchantman had sunk, a victim of the mysterious new underwater

fleet of Germany. But it were more convenient that none should be sunk. Here, at last, was a fine opportunity for the United States to try to recover the position as a Champion of Right and Public Law which she had gravely compromised by her neglect to protest against the wanton assault on Serbia and the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. The Allies claimed to be effectively blockading German ports. Germany retorted, by her invention of a "war-zone," that she, in turn, had declared an effective blockade of the British Islands, and that she had done this by means of the submarine. The submarine, however, is an instrument of warfare which is incapable of "blockading," in any such sense as has hitherto been ascribed by international law to the word "blockade." The situation thus presented was, even technically speaking, a delicate one, and it brought the reality of the war well home, at last, to the American people. How would Washington deal with this new and interesting situation?

On February 10, the United States replied to the menace of the German memorandum of February 4. The American Note was firm and categorical. Things were beginning well. This Note declared the intention of the United States to hold Germany to "strict accountability" for all acts of piracy. Six days later Germany agreed to the principle set forth in the Note, but appealed to American compassion, pleaded extenuating circumstances, owing to the "peculiar

nature" of the struggle for national existence (which she had imposed upon the world in violating all the laws of international honour)! On the 7th of May a transatlantic liner, the unarmed *Lusitania*, was sent to the bottom of the sea unwarned, carrying with her at least one hundred Americans. Washington called on Germany, on May 13, to make reparations, and declared that the United States would "omit no word or act" necessary to maintain the rights of its citizens on the high seas. An entire year was to pass before the President, driven at last to "words" unambiguous enough to constitute an "act," menaced Germany in such terms that she had to choose between humiliation and an immediate rupture of relations.

The Note of May 13 despatched, a discussion ensued as to whether the *Lusitania* was or was not armed, and, on June 10, a third American Note warned Germany, now "with solemn emphasis," that the principles of humanity must be maintained. The President "hoped against hope" that he need not speak again. Just a month later Germany, in fact, reiterated her assurances that United States ships engaged in legitimate trade would not be attacked. On July 21 a fourth American Note reached Berlin. Further attacks on merchantmen carrying Americans, it said, would be regarded as "unfriendly," and Berlin was requested to understand that the United States would contend for freedom of the seas, without compromise or cost. Berlin made

no show of understanding. Many another merchantman still was scuttled, and Germany stupidly began that parallel policy of blackmail which was to be expected. She set in motion one of those insolent campaigns of diversion and intimidation characteristic of her methods throughout the world, the latest and most perfect instance of which had been seen in Italy during the early months of the war. The preparations she had already made on American soil for the successful prosecution of such a policy have been described in the previous chapter. Meanwhile, the *Lusitania* case remained unsettled. Fires in ammunition factories, strikes, outrages of treasonable character, were being multiplied throughout the United States. German organizations continued their machinations against the unity of the nation. Potsdam wire-pullers were corrupting pacificists and certain politicians. The President's longanimity was bearing its logical fruit—ah, if only that cursed war might end!—and Berlin and Vienna, more and more convinced that they could act with impunity, finally tore off the mask, and formally notified the United States on February 10, 1916, that, after March 1, submarines would ruthlessly sink armed merchantmen. Just a week later the American Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, informed the German Ambassador that the United States must have written assurances that the proposed submarine warfare would not jeopardize the rights of Americans. Meanwhile the German con-

spirators were busy in the Congressional districts and at Washington, seeking to force American public opinion to demand from the President repudiation of his submarine policy. Congress was finally asked to pass a Bill informing American citizens that if they travelled henceforth in the European war-zone, it would be at their risk and peril! The President looked the peril squarely in the face. On March 7 he forced Congress to take a stand. He summoned it to declare *Yea* or *Nay* whether it meant to succumb to the dictates of a Foreign Power. The American people was, now at last self-consciously, mounting the long calvary which stretches ahead of every people who would become a self-respecting nation.

When the American people positively realized what was going on in Washington, when they beheld the President face to face with subversive elements which he was manfully seeking to master in the interests of the nation, they too began to learn the lessons which the Head of the State had been so long in learning. The fact was clear: Germany was flouting the United States in ways intolerable. Her influence was tending to be omnipresent. The shock of her impact was so sudden and so powerful that the whole central legislative machinery seemed momentarily to be thrown out of gear. The prolonged attempt of certain Congressmen and Senators to tie the hands of the President in his negotiations with Germany over the illegal use

of submarines was, in reality, the revelation of a disposition on the part of the Sixty-Fourth Congress to surrender American rights at the dictation of a Foreign Power.

The German-Americans subsidized by the Wilhelmstrasse had never made a secret of their plans. As far back as February, 1915, the editor of the German organ, *The Fatherland*, which was being sent free to innocent homes all over the United States, had indited such articles as this :—

" You have called our brothers," Mr. Viereck said, " by the vilest names blown to you from the gutters of London. You have spat upon the memory of our mothers. You have trampled upon the graves of our fathers. You have sown the storm ; you shall reap the whirlwind. You have refused to listen to our reasoning. You were deaf to our pleas. Now we shall teach you a lesson. We shall go into the arena of politics. We shall try to beat you at your own game. One hundred and seventy members of Congress are of Irish extraction. There is no reason why they should not be joined by one hundred and seventy of German extraction. There is no reason why we should not labour for the election of men of our own blood, who are in accord with our principles, which are the principles of true Americanism. We are with America, right or wrong, at all times. But we prefer America right to America wrong. We now propose to set America right. We shall not fight single-handed. Americans of Irish and Swedish extraction, Americans of many forbears other than German, even Americans of Yankee blood, are with us. You have ridiculed the hyphen. We shall make it a virtue. We shall make it a bridge between German idealism and American idealism. We shall fight for American principles as American citizens. If you choose to

maintain the hyphen to discredit those principles, yours is the blame, not ours."[1]

At the same time adroit appeals were being made to the Irish-Americans in the form of a secret German pamphlet sent out by the German Foreign Office and entitled "Great Britain and Europe." This work, from the pen of Count Reventlow, "printed for private circulation only" among the Irish, contained fourteen chapters devoted to Irish history as the Germans would like the Irish and the world to view it, and culminated in the following passages:—

Germany is fighting for her own existence; she is fighting also for the liberation of the world. The great day of liberation will surely come, sooner or later. The *condition sine quâ non* of that liberation is the destruction of Britain's maritime supremacy. For as long as Britain rules the waves humanity must remain her slave. This is fundamental truth. And another fundamental truth is that Britain's maritime supremacy cannot be destroyed until Ireland is a free country. So long as Ireland remains a British Colony—or, rather, a British fortress—Britain can at any time shut off the

[1] A little more than a year later, suiting the action to the word, a deputation of German-Americans informed the Republican Party leaders that if the Republican Convention at Chicago gave the nomination to Mr. Roosevelt, every German-American in the country would vote the Democratic ticket. The newspapers that recorded this fact mentioned, on the same date (June 2, 1916), that Mr. Roosevelt had just "delivered a vigorous attack, in a speech at St. Louis, on the hyphenated Americans, whom he accused of moral treason."

whole of Northern and Eastern Europe from all access to the ocean, even as by means of Gibraltar, Port Said and Aden she can close the Mediterranean. Ireland is the key of the Atlantic. Release Ireland from bondage and the Atlantic is at once opened up to Europe. Therefore must Ireland be restored to Europe if Europe is to be free. An independent neutral Irish nation would be the natural bulwark of European liberty in the West. Freedom depends on freedom of the seas, and freedom of the seas depends on the liberation of Ireland.[1]

There is nothing peculiar to America in the fact that legislative assemblies meddle with foreign affairs. Such action is inherent in the very principle of representative government as such government has developed in modern democracies. Even amid the more experienced Parliaments of England and France—where the oft-repeated echoes of chronic international collisions ought to create a more accurate sense of international business—demagogic motives have inspired with growing frequency a clamour against "secret diplomacy." Legislators often recklessly sacrifice the international interests of their country to base political intrigue, party interests, their personal interests in their electoral districts.

But in the United States 30,000 Bills engage the attention of Washington annually, and these Bills have almost exclusively a political or

[1] Here we have brilliantly revealed the long thoughts of the German Government in fomenting the Sinn Fein rebellion of Easter Monday, 1916.

personal character, representing the efforts of individual Congressmen to please their districts.

"Thus nearly 20,000 are Bills which place selected individuals on the national pension lists. About 5,000 provide for dredging creeks, rivers, and harbours. A mass of others grant public buildings to communities that do not need them. Others appropriate Federal money for the payment of claims—many illusory in character—against the Government. Properly all these matters are no legitimate concern of Congress—they are merely details of administration which the executive departments should attend to. This practice, however, has developed in Congress a demoralizing tendency to pander to localities. Almost any group that makes a noise can attract a Congressman's attention. A half-dozen telegrams and a few letters will scare the average Congressman.

"Nearly every Congressional district, except those in the South, has a considerable proportion of German-Americans. Some possess far more than others; there are few, however, that do not contain a certain proportion. According to the prevailing system, these voters have personal claims upon their representatives. Since the day Congress came together last December, this German element has conducted an active propaganda. More accurately expressed, perhaps, a propaganda has been conducted in its name, for there is yet no reason to assume that the millions of thrifty and law-abiding Germans in this

country, the mass of whom have testified to their patriotism on critical occasions, openly champion the cause of Germany against the United States. There is, however, a professional element that is unpatriotically active. It seeks to compel our Government to abandon neutrality in the interests of the German Empire. It has flooded Congress with petitions demanding an embargo on the shipment of munitions. It openly announces its intention to 'swing the German vote' against President Wilson in the coming campaign. Its main headquarters, the German-American Alliance, is avowedly a political organization.

"Its spokesmen denounce the President in vulgar language; its emissaries are actively summoning strength for next fall's election; its journalistic advocates are abusing America and its leading public men in a style that, in a less open-minded nation, would cause public disorder. These gentlemen began to assail Congressmen as soon as the question of armed merchantmen became an active one. The usual 'back fires,' in the shape of telegrams, letters and personal visits, began to frighten the Federal legislators. An investigation—I have myself seen specimens of these communications—usually disclosed an identity of phrasing and authorship which indicated that the campaign, though active, represented no great spontaneity. It was manufactured public opinion of the most diaphanous kind. Yet it had its influence. Indeed, affected by this as well as by their general attitude of

accommodation toward constituents, the mass of Congressmen gave way. The German-American vote, in their eyes, now took on stupendous proportions. Through the majority leaders, Congress formally notified the President that it overwhelmingly disapproved his German policy. An inexperienced Texan Congressman, hitherto unknown to fame, suddenly found himself an international figure. He had introduced a resolution which essentially denounced the President's policy, formally abandoned the principles of international law and humanity, and enrolled the representatives of the American people on the side of Germany. The question presented by the Washington situation was simply this: does the American Congress stand with their President or the Kaiser? . . . The wave of indignation that swelled from all parts of the country disclosed that Congress was opposing the finest instincts of the people. Mr. Wilson accepted the Congressional challenge. He demanded that the members stand up and take their side, either with him or with the enemies of the country. The leaders—Messrs. Kern, Clark, Kitchin—had said that two-thirds of the members of both Chambers would vote against him. 'Very well,' answered Mr. Wilson, 'stand up like men and do it.' For himself he was prepared to meet the test. There was every reason why Mr. Wilson could afford to take this stand. The fact that he spoke for at least ninety million Americans made his strength

irresistible. Not a few professional agitators, but the hearty demands of an outraged American public—these were the people the President was hearing from. Evidently the Executive had sufficient authority for 'encroaching' on the prerogatives of the legislature."[1]

The anonymous and well-informed author of this article adds: "This latest Congressional episode is not one that the American people can particularly rejoice in. It has served one great purpose, however, in emphasizing once more the importance of centralized leadership in our governmental system. Fortunately, we had a President who fully understood the dignity and responsibility of his office; only Mr. Wilson's supreme intelligence, however, saved us from a great national calamity. Under less commanding leadership the nation would have found itself insulted and disregarded, and a situation would have rapidly developed that must have inevitably ended in war. When the history of these times is written, Mr. Wilson's heroic stand will be seen in the full perspective as perhaps the one event that most successfully made for peace."

Yes, there can be no doubt as to the fineness and the remarkable consequences of Mr. Wilson's triumph. Here, at last, he had shown political courage and real leadership—though the courage had been confined to mastering unruly Chambers that threatened his executive will, and wounded

[1] See article, "Shall we have Responsible Government?" *World's Work*, May, 1916.

his *amour propre*—and he had, as the writer just quoted says, " saved us from a great national calamity." But to this writer who talks of the " perspectives of history," it may be pertinent to observe that Mr. Wilson's " heroic stand " would not have been needed if, at the outset of the war, he had adopted a policy which would have peopled the " perspectives of history " with quite other possibilities of action. The quickest way, perhaps, to make this point clear is to ask the reader to recall for a moment the incidents of the Sinn Fein rebellion in Dublin in May, 1916, in connection with the history of the relations between Ireland and England during the last three or four years, and, holding that whole episode clear in his mind, to re-read the above passage with the following slight changes :—

This latest *British Imperial* episode is not one that the *English* people can particularly rejoice in. It has served one great purpose, however, in emphasizing once more the importance of centralized leadership in the *British* governmental system. Fortunately we had a *Prime Minister* who fully understood the dignity and responsibility of his office ; only *Mr. Asquith's* supreme intelligence, however, saved us from a great national calamity. Under less commanding leadership the nation would have found itself insulted and disregarded, and a situation would have rapidly developed that must have inevitably ended in war. When the history of these times is written, Mr. *Asquith's* heroic stand will be seen in the full perspective as perhaps the one event that most successfully made for peace.

But let it be frankly granted that Mr. Wilson, who stood for a " neutrality " of a very peculiar

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form, and whose constant aim was to keep the United States out of war, won in the United States Congress a remarkable provisional victory. He appeared to have lopped from the Pan-German octopus some of its most powerful tentacles, those that it had flung out over vast regions of American territory. He thus secured the authority he needed to claim for the second time the right of leading the American people. Fourteen months after his "strict accountability" Note to Germany, on April 19, 1916, the President came before the Congress, just after the destruction of the French cross-Channel steamer *Sussex*, and read a statement explaining why he had just informed Germany that she must immediately abandon her methods of warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, or prepare for complete severance of diplomatic relations :—

" . . . The Government of the United States has been very patient. At every stage of this distressing experience of tragedy after tragedy in which its own citizens were involved, it has sought to be restrained from any extreme course of action or of protest by a thoughtful consideration of the extraordinary circumstances of this unprecedented war, and actuated in all that it said or did by the sentiments of genuine friendship which the people of the United States have always entertained and continue to entertain towards the German nation. It has of course accepted the successive explanations and assurances of the German Imperial Government as given in entire sincerity and good faith, and has hoped, even against hope, that it would prove to be possible for the German Government so to order

and control the acts of its naval commanders as to square its policy with the principles of humanity as embodied in the law of nations. It has been willing to wait until the significance of the facts became absolutely unmistakable and susceptible of but one interpretation.

"That point has now unhappily been reached. The facts are susceptible of but one interpretation. The Imperial German Government has been unable to put any limits or restraints upon its warfare against either freight or passenger ships. It has, therefore, become painfully evident that the position which this Government took at the very outset is inevitable, namely that the use of submarines for the destruction of an enemy's commerce is of necessity, because of the very character of the vessels employed and the very methods of attack which their employment of course involves, incompatible with the principles of humanity, the long-established and incontrovertible rights of neutrals, and the sacred immunities of non-combatants.

"I have deemed it my duty, therefore, to say to the Imperial German Government that if it is still its purpose to prosecute relentless and indiscriminate warfare against vessels of commerce by the use of submarines, notwithstanding the now demonstrated impossibility of conducting that warfare in accordance with what the Government of the United States must consider the sacred and indisputable rules of international law and the universally recognized dictates of humanity, the Government of the United States is at last forced to the conclusion that there is but one course it can pursue; and that unless the Imperial German Government should now immediately declare and effect an abandonment of its present methods of warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, this Government can have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the Government of the German Empire altogether.

"This decision I have arrived at with the keenest regret; the possibility of the action contemplated I

am sure all thoughtful Americans will look forward to with unaffected reluctance. But we cannot forget that we are in some sort and by the force of circumstances the responsible spokesman of the rights of humanity, and that we cannot remain silent while those rights seem in process of being swept utterly away in the maëlstrom of this terrible war. We owe it to a due regard for our own rights as a nation, to our sense of duty as a representative of the rights of neutrals the world over, and to a just conception of the rights of mankind to take this stand now with the utmost solemnity and firmness.

"I have taken it, and taken it in the confidence that it will meet with your approval and support. All sober-minded men must unite in hoping that the Imperial German Government, which has in other circumstances stood as the champion of all that we are now contending for in the interest of humanity, may recognize the justice of our demands and meet them in the spirit in which they are made."

The new Note was an ultimatum, and was taken as such. On May 4, after a general war-council of the Empire, the German Government replied to the American Government that orders had been given to German naval commanders to the effect that no merchant ships would be sunk, either within or without the naval "war zone," except in conformity with the general regulations of international law—unless such ships attempted to escape or to offer resistance. Germany, however, in the same breath, made other more characteristic reservations. She appealed once again to the compassion of the United States. Was not Germany the piteous victim of an unlawful blockade by the Allies; and was not

"Freedom of the Seas" the common ideal of the United States and Germany against the world-wide naval tyranny of Britain; and had not Germany twice proved to the world within the last few months that she was ready for an honourable peace, and that it was not she who was keeping the war-clouds rolling?

"The German Government does not doubt that the Government of the United States will now demand and insist that the British Government henceforth observe the rules of international law universally recognized before the war and as they are formulated in the Note presented by the Government of the United States to the British Government on December 28, 1914.

"In the event of the negotiations undertaken by the Government of the United States being unable to attain the object which it desires, namely, to see the laws of humanity respected by all the belligerent nations, the German Government will consider the new situation, in regard to which it must reserve to itself complete liberty of decision."

Always the same crass devices, the same insulting presumption of an inevitable American gullibility, the same application of the monstrous diplomatic traditions and blackmailing system of the Prussia of Frederick "the Great," and of Bismarck, which the frank Bernhardi had expounded in "Germany and the Next War":—

"Alliances in which each contracting party has different interests will never hold good under all conditions, and therefore cannot represent a permanent political system.

"'There is no alliance or *agreement* in the world that can be regarded as effective if it is not fastened

by the bond of the common and reciprocal interests; if in any treaty the advantage is all on one side and the other gets nothing, this disproportion destroys the obligation.' These are the words of Frederick the Great, our foremost political teacher, *pace* Bismarck.

"There must be no self-deception on the point that political arrangements have only a qualified value, that they are always concluded with a tacit reservation. Every treaty of alliance presupposes the *rebus sic stantibus;* for since it must satisfy the interests of each contracting party *it clearly can only hold as long as those interests are really benefited.* . . . Nothing can compel a State to act counter to its own interests."

Thus Mr. Wilson's diplomatic triumph consisted solely in the extraction from Germany of promises of provisional good behaviour, so long as such conduct should suit Germany's interests. In reality its exact significance became visible only if interpreted in connection with the gigantic events then taking place in France, where, in one of the decisive battles of the world, Frenchmen were holding at bay the armies of the Crown Prince at Verdun, and inflicting so smashing a blow on the *moral* of the German rulers and the German people that William II. had to cower before the uplifted finger of Prince von Bülow, whom he detests, and seek at last to follow the advice of those who were urging him to prepare the readjustments of a future based on the certainty of Germany's irrevocable defeat.

Meanwhile the attitude of Germany had become so docile that it was legitimate to wonder whether Verdun even provided a perfect key to

the enigma of Mr. Wilson's diplomatic victory. The German Ambassador at Washington sent out a circular to the German Consuls, advising Germans in America to observe scrupulously the laws of the United States(!), a singular form of what may be called ostrich diplomacy, in view of the multitudinous proofs of the action of the entire staff of the German Embassy in organizing crime and sedition on American territory. The Von Papens and the Von Igels had been banished or arrested, but the arch-conspirator still remained at large, and he could still manœuvre in order to resuscitate in the President's Pharaonic mind the old fixed idea of mediation. Who else, in fact, could now save Germany? The Pope and the President—even the President, in spite of his "diplomatic success"—were surely not altogether satisfied with the *rôle* they had played during the war. Germany was ready to dictate to them a finer part. There is nothing she enjoys more than being diplomatic prompter on the stage of the world. Chronic meddling in the affairs of her neighbours has been her secular way. Her sole part now was to whisper the *dénouement* of the sublime Tragedy in which she was playing a part that no longer suited her.

On the 20th of May President Wilson went down to North Carolina, and after a tribute to the achievements of American democracy—which, he said, makes American life "a sort of prophetic sample of mankind"—he remarked, in

the spirit of the French professor's beautiful thought, "The Land where Hatred Expires":—

"Does it not interest you that America has run before the rest of the world in the making of this great human experiment, and is it not a sign of the dawn of a new age that the one thing whereupon the world is about to fall back is the moral judgment of mankind? Lots would like to think that the spirit of this occasion—the 141st anniversary of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence—could be expressed if we imagined ourselves lifting some sacred emblem of counsel and of peace, of accommodative and righteous judgment, before the nations of the world and reminding them of a passage of Scripture: 'After the wind, after the earthquake, after the fire the still small voice of humanity.'"

And the President proceeded to show that he considered the war had come to a deadlock! The war, he said, was due to a clash of national standards, traditions and politics, and . . . "those are things that, in contact with each other, do not make much progress. When you cannot overcome you must take counsel."[1]

The quadrennial consultation of the American people for the election of a Leader was at hand. Did Mr. Wilson hope to rally, at the eleventh hour, the bands mobilized by the Pan-German conspirators over whom he had won such a victory of *amour propre* in his famous clash with Congress? Was he willing to let that battle be a bygone, now that he had also to his credit a greater victory still, the apparent victory over

[1] Washington Correspondent of *The Times*, May 23, 1916.

the Kaiser, whom, as he jubilantly reminded a company of journalists in Washington a few days before, he had resolutely "spanked"? Had he made, in his mind's neutrality, some unholy pact with urgent political calculations, by which the sympathy of the German vote was to be purchased in return for American overtures and manœuvres for the restoration of peace? There is no keener politician in the Democratic party than the distinguished American Ambassador at Berlin, who had spent several days at German headquarters when the Council of War was deliberating over the tenor of the reply to be sent to America's ultimatum. Was the Kaiser ready for any and every humiliation in order to keep "his friend Roosevelt" out of office? Idle speculations these. All that can be affirmed, as an historical fact, is that Mr. Wilson was now again greatly disappointing those at home and abroad who recalled his remarkable confession as to the "many things and many conditions" he had learned and noted during a year of war, and recalled as well his Annual Address of December 7, 1915. They had naïvely supposed that he had learned the really essential "things," to wit: that America had, after all, profoundly "to do" with what he euphemistically called "the present quarrel"; that mediation on the part of America had always been absurd, but that it was a proposal particularly odious on the part of a man who was capable of informing the world that "the quarrel" had dragged those who were

engaged in it so far that they " had lost all sense of responsibility," had, in a word, " gone so mad that really it would be well to have nothing to do with them." They thought that the President had learned at last that the war was not so much a clash of " national standards " as a fight to a finish, persisted in by a group of lucid and chivalrous peoples resolved to defend the cause of Right and Civilization against the onslaughts of a barbarous nation; that, by his own inaction at the fitting time, the prestige of the United States, like the prestige of Greece, had received a blow from which it would take years to recover; that, finally, German conspiracy was still rampant on American soil, and that the United States had no time to lose if she would become not merely a great nation, but even a nation at all, instead of remaining in the embryonic form of " a sort of prophetic sample of mankind."

History is bound to be impartial, but its impartiality should be the impartiality of a tribunal. The historian is not responsible for the facts of history; his duty is limited to the single obligation of not concealing any of the facts and of not stopping short of a verdict in the interpretation of the obvious meaning of the facts.

Mr. Wilson's lack of foresight—the consequence partially of his ignorance of European affairs, partially of his political philosophy and of his conception of democratic leadership: " the only one source of power is the people's will "

—entailed for him a long series of futile embarrassments which would have been spared to a Head of the State of greater competence, of quick decision and of real presence of mind. By failing to act at the right moment in the right way he created for himself that network of difficulties in which he rhetorically floundered for long months in his efforts to reach the day of doom, Election Day, while keeping the American people out of war by processes known only to pacificists and humanitarians. Instead of leading the nation he found himself obliged to conform to, and then to render effective, the conflicting elements of the "popular will." Fortunately, the neglect of his duty at the outset gave the bureaux of the Wilhelmstrasse time to organize, with the assistance of the German-American Alliance, their outrageous—though so useful—campaign against the unity of the American nation, their political blackmail of the Representatives of the American people, and their ancient projects of making America a pro-German protectorate.

It is true that any and every disinterested gesture that the United States might make on the side of the Allies—even such a gesture as Italy had made—might have served the interests of the United States, serving as well the interests of the Allies. But conduct so comprehensive, so far-seeing and intelligent, can be expected of no statesman in this imperfect world. Moreover, in this case, it would always have been possible to argue that declaration of war, without the

justification of other than purely rational motives, would have created for the United States just that state of civil war which it was, above all, necessary to avoid. Again, an over-ingenious historian might argue that no method was better adapted than that of Mr. Wilson to the exigencies of the case of the United States, since nothing short of what really took place, in consequence of "watchful waiting," could have begun to educate the American people as a whole to the bitter realities of their national and international plight. But Mr. Wilson has himself confessed that what he did he did not do "on purpose"; that when he acted as he acted, and failed to act as he failed to act, he was all "unaware of many things and many conditions" that eighteen months of war had revealed to him. Accordingly, though his actions were to turn out to have been useful, no credit could be given to the author.

If sober statesmanship in Washington required that the United States should instantly protest against the assault on Serbia and the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, and should no less instantly declare its neutrality, it was not so much because humanity is, morally speaking, one, and because the separate nations have a common interest to preserve as many of the civilized ideals as may be preserved; it was not even because the whole spirit of the Monroe Doctrine dictated, and facilitated, such double action; it was not altogether because any other action than that, or any inaction, was indeed to

treat the Hague Conventions as worthless scraps of paper, and thereby to destroy the faith of the world in the validity of the signature of the United States. It was because, before and above all—and independently of all motives of historical tradition or national honour—the vital interests of the United States, at home and abroad (and perhaps particularly at home), required action that would permit it to seize the unexpectedly magnificent occasion offered by the European war—a war that had happily been begun and was being waged in such special conditions—to put its own house in order. It was because the opportunity had now arisen to liquidate a situation which could not be allowed to continue without imperilling all that gave to the name of America a special sense in the world's annals, a situation which was transforming the United States into a sort of Austria without any Hapsburg Monarch ready to undertake its artificial unification: a State which is not a Nation, an Empire that is an amalgam of unamalgamated Peoples, a "nation" of which it may be said that the only nation that cannot be found there is the American nation. It was not even because such double action on the part of the United States would help to shorten the war by encouraging the other neutral Powers to take the firm and natural stand against brigand manners in international relations. It was because failure to act in this double way was obviously to diminish the prestige of the

United States, to weaken its capacity of action in the new *post-bellum* era when it was to find itself confronted with a new world in the Pacific, a new Australia, a new Japan.

Thus, a sane statesmanlike conception of the world-situation, including that of the United States, was no less necessary than a temperament capable of prompt resolution, for the guidance of the American people in the critical epoch initiated by Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. Leadership of this kind would not have been wanting if a statesman of the experience of Mr. Roosevelt had been at the White House. It is probable that such a statesman would have acted in the nick of time in defence not only of international law and humanity but of America's vital interests. The proofs that may be adduced in support of this assertion are all but conclusive. They are not reasons based on Mr. Roosevelt's attitude and utterances throughout the war. They are based on what is known of Mr. Roosevelt's manner and methods when in office, his realistic habit of mind, his liking for responsibility, his well-proven acquaintance with Europe and with contemporary world-movements.

The American people are perhaps not generally aware of Mr. Roosevelt's effective intervention at the moment of the Conference of Algeciras, his direct intervention with the German Emperor at that critical hour, when he played more than once the part of a Daniel come to judgment, a diplomatic Rhadamanthus who called the Hohen-

zollern halt. One day in March, 1905, William II., it will be remembered, entered the roadstead at Tangiers. Saluted by the French officer in command of the *Du Chayla*, he plied him insistently with the question: "You who know these waters well, what do you think of the state of the sea? Shall I be able to go ashore?" The weather was calm and the French officer saw quite clearly that the Emperor hesitated. Two hours later telegrams arrived from Berlin. Prince von Bülow was in office at the Wilhelmstrasse, M. Delcassé at the Quai d'Orsay. The German Chancellor had his plan, and he insisted that the Emperor should land and make his fateful speech against the policy of France.[1] Yet still the German Emperor hesitated. Once on shore he nervously questioned the French *chargé d'affaires*, Comte de Cherisey: "Are you sure you have received nothing from Paris?" What William II. wanted, as M. André Tardieu pointed out a few years later[2] at another moment of crisis, was a "something or other, a word, an order which would permit him to avoid a demonstration that, in reality, he did not approve, which would dispense him from the obligation of assuming a personal responsibility, which would leave the coast clear for explanations less strained than the bitter dialogue prepared by his Ministers."

[1] Prince von Bülow proudly claims, in his book on "German Policy" (French edition, page 103), that this action was taken "on his advice."

[2] *Le Temps*, July 28, 1911.

Two months later, at the camp of Doeberitz, just after the Kronprinz's marriage, General de Lacroix was galloping at the Emperor's side. Suddenly turning to the French soldier, the Emperor said: "He has gone! Now we shall be able to do business together!" It was true. M. Delcassé, the French Minister who, during seven busy, fateful years, had succeeded in undoing the work of Bismarck, had just been driven from office by the familiar processes of German political blackmail co-operating with the pusillanimity of political foes at home. M. Delcassé's enemies had been made to believe that his maintenance at the Quai d'Orsay would entail a European war. Germany had thus run up the red flag of the Morocco difficulty. At this juncture, when the international situation was most tense, in June, 1905, it was the personal intervention of Mr. Roosevelt with the Emperor which led directly to the Agreement for the Algeciras Conference. At one moment, as everybody knows, the Conference reached a deadlock. It was then, and as a last resort, that the Emperor's attention was called to a letter which he had written the President in the preceding June —and suddenly the deadlock was broken. I need not give further details, but I may add that though in Paris, in the summer of 1905, the people at large did not know precisely what had been done, they did know in an instinctive way that it was owing to Mr. Roosevelt that the matter had passed off without bringing war.

The then Prime Minister, M. Rouvier, was fully aware of the facts, and made no secret in private conversation of the gratitude he felt towards the President of the United States for his prompt, resolute and intelligent action.

That action was, indeed, determinant, and it was characteristic personal action and not political, but its remarkable consequences were both political and international. The case of Mr. Roosevelt's intervention at Algeciras, contrary to the traditional narrow conception of the Monroe Doctrine, but in full harmony with the spirit of that Doctrine, is simply one instance of his manner and methods as a statesman. The history of the "mights-have-been" is, on the whole, a futile exercise. But in this connection I can myself testify to the prophetic penetration of Mr. Roosevelt's conception of the European situation in the springtime of 1914, just before the war; and from what I personally know of the secret history of the Algeciras Conference, and above all of the psychology of the German Emperor, I think it probable that if a President such as Mr. Roosevelt had been at the head of the United States in 1914, he would have intervened so unhesitatingly—and perhaps so "unconstitutionally"—in the last weeks of July, 1914, by direct reminder to "his friend," William II., that any such illogical corollary of the no less illogical assault on Serbia as the violation of Belgian neutrality would intimately concern Washington, that the Anglo-Russian proposals

for a Conference might ultimately have been accepted.

It is true that the German war-party was bent on bringing matters to a crisis before 1917 at the latest.

"Lack of character" is often due to physical flabbiness; it is due even oftener still to lack of knowledge, insufficient experience; but, whatever the cause, the consequences are invariably the same.

It is rare that it is possible to detect in human history any relation between a motive and a consequence. Politics is neither an exact science nor a branch of ethics. Politics is a delicate art, dealing, in a spirit of sociological æsthetics, with the shifting constituents of human nature, the selfish needs and the unselfish aspirations, and combining them for opportunist ends in passing syntheses, in which a temporary balance of power is secured for human society between individual rights and collective duties.

Commonsense has invented the formula: "A stitch in time saves nine." "Nine," however, is only a symbolic number. Mr. Asquith, Sir E. Grey, the Great British Liberal Party, discovered in the dark days of August, 1914, that in politics as in morals, nine invariably means nine plus. They had refused to look facts in the face even when they were thrust under their noses by a Lord Roberts and by other men that were just as wise. The great British people is now paying the piper. The case of the United

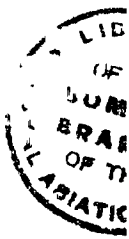
States and of its temporary leader, President Wilson, is almost identical. They were not ready for action because they were oblivious of all the obvious realities that certain of us had recommended to their attention. President Wilson having failed to seize the event, to be the constitutional guide and prophet of a nation which would have followed him any-whither—as it follows any President who has the gift of leadership—was compelled to devise belated methods of saving the honour of his country and of conserving its traditions. He had failed to utilize the Monroe Doctrine, he had ignored the potential application of the Hague Conference Treaties. He had thereby given the enemies of the United States time to mine American soil. The Wilhelmstrasse began its long campaign of abuse of American guilelessness, ignorance, prejudices and idealism.[1] What could be saved? Perhaps "Humanity," whatever Humanity might mean. The President began to indite that brilliant series of impartial penultimatums to the belligerent Powers by which he hoped to convey America's resolution to save what still remained out of the rack and ruin of international law,

[1] Among the letters found in the possession of the American journalist, Mr. James F. J. Archibald, who was arrested by the British authorities at Falmouth, were missives from Captain Von Papen, the German military attaché at Washington. In one of these letters Captain von Papen spoke of the American people as "these idiotic Yankees."

while preventing extension of the war to the Western Hemisphere, and possibly so prolonging these literary exercises as to have an unanswered letter still before him when the war was over. But the war continued longer than he had expected, and the embarrassments of his own creation loomed more and more menacingly. His methods for isolating the United States were bringing her closer and closer to the maelstrom. The American people had been given time, and been given it by their President, for national education. Filled with the sense of his responsibility, fearful that the whirlwind which he himself had loosened might sweep down on us, and his Prospero wand no longer avail, he began a campaign of "preparations," the illogical capriciousness of which startled the country. A stitch in time saves nine. Himself the victim of the now enlightened public opinion of the masses, he finally, at the eleventh hour, resolved to act. He came down to Congress and he solemnly told the country a portion of the truth —what, for the moment, at all events, was most essential—and he craved their support for his inadequate act of energy.

It is an exceedingly curious chapter of American history, a chapter, in fact, altogether unprecedented in the annals of the United States, unless we may cite as a parallel case, and as a somewhat analogous moment, the Administration of Buchanan, who was the melancholy great American forerunner of the policy

of "watchful waiting." He kept the country out of war while he himself was in office. But after him there befell the horrors that we know.



CHAPTER V

THE CRISIS

Consequences of the Action of the Government of the United States—The future Foreign Policy of the United States

THE President's postponement of useful and decisive action at the outbreak of the war, his adoption of neutrality without an accompanying protest against Austria's treatment of Serbia and against Germany's assault on Luxembourg and Belgium, and his efforts to devise belated methods for saving the honour of his country—efforts to which he was constrained as a last resort, owing to his failure to act in time—were interpretable, it has been argued, as part of what he conceived to be a larger American policy, a policy which Europe had little time to watch, the legitimate Pan-American preoccupations of Washington. This is an hypothesis so speciously plausible that it is not surprising that the more intimate friends of the President, one, above all, whose own reputation is intimately bound up with that of Mr. Wilson, Colonel House, the Père Joseph of the Washington Cabinet, should have found it attractive, and have sought to use it in explanation of American hesitations. On February 25, 1916, there appeared in the *Journal*

de Genève an interview with Colonel House. Colonel House, after having declared that President Wilson was "one of the most luminous and best equipped brains in the world," said :—

"Once he has decided on a line of conduct, no power in the world can possibly make him deviate from the path he has mapped out for himself. Moreover, he keeps his own secrets, and he rarely discloses his plans even to his most intimate friends. But you may always be sure that he knows exactly what he is about. The best example I can give you is what has taken place with regard to his Mexican policy. . . .

"Over and above the Mexican question President Wilson saw a question infinitely more important for the future not only of the United States but also of the two Americas. When he became President he perceived that all the Republics of Central America and of South America felt a deeply-rooted distrust and even hatred of the United States, a distrust that was justified by the imperialistic policy of the great Northern Republic. The President decided to put an end to this state of things. He undertook to prove to the other republics that the United States had no craving for an inch of territory beyond their own borders, and that they meant to respect religiously the political independence and the territorial integrity of all the other American States. Given such a principle as this, how could President Wilson have intervened brutally in the intestinal quarrels of Mexico? It would have been tantamount to destroying for several generations every hope of fraternal understanding between the Latin Republics and the United States. . . .

"President Wilson accordingly, with unflinching energy and perseverance, devoted himself to the task of bringing about the concord which was so dear to his heart, and in January last, on the occasion of the Pan-American Scientific Congress in Washington, he

was able to proclaim the success of this enterprise. In a memorable speech delivered on the 6th of January, 1916, President Wilson was able to declare that the twenty-one American Republics were in agreement to co-operate fraternally, on the basis of perfect equality, in the economic and moral development of the Two Americas. The representatives declared it to be their firm intention to unite in all circumstances for the maintenance of the territorial integrity of each of them, small or great. Thereby was realized one of the most important points of the foreign policy programme that President Wilson had drawn up for himself on taking office. . . .

"You may conclude from this that President Wilson has perfectly definite ideas as to the rôle which America should play in the present crisis. What are those ideas? He is perhaps the only one who knows them, but I beg you to believe that the President is defending, as he has said so often, the superior interests of humanity."

In presence of such declarations as these it would seem to be impossible to avoid a discussion of Mr. Wilson's Mexican policy and of Mr. Wilson's Pan-American diplomacy. Colonel House unquestionably is so far right that it is certain that those who seek to praise Mr. Wilson for his general treatment of American affairs during the Great War would find their task facilitated by adopting the view that the President of the United States was all along striving to regard the war, in spite of its gigantic character and its paramount interest for Americans, as subordinate in interest to the Pan-American problems in the Western Hemisphere. If, to use the mathematical expression, he took the World War

as a function of Pan-American questions; if, however paradoxically, he was saying to himself, "Let us make American hay while the storm beats, let us work out in the Western Hemisphere a few solid equations of plebiscitary diplomacy in the name of Humanity—that result, at all events, will be all to the good for us and for civilization, and then I shall be free to deal with the 'superior interests of humanity' beyond the seas," the historian would have a provisional explanation of the foreign policy of Washington during the Great War. He would then have to point out why an idea so interesting was bound in its application to lead to results deplorable both for "humanity" and for the United States. A demonstration of this sort would require a minute analysis of the Mexican problem in connection with the whole Pan-American question. It is of subordinate interest in such a book as the present one, and I prefer to defer it until it may find its place in the study on which I am now engaged as to the causes and consequences of the Great War. The sole task which I have kept steadily before me in the present Essay is to explain, first, the reasons for the peculiar reactions of the American Government and the American people under the impact following on the criminal aggression of Austria and Germany; secondly, the grave consequences for American prestige and American society of the failure of the Government of the United States to comprehend the significance

of the World War, and to act in defence of the vital interests of the people at a moment of national crisis.

The year 1916 is of extraordinary gravity for the United States. We have entered into our crisis.[1] At no moment since the "Declaration of Independence" has the people of the United States been in such need of the guidance of a statesman, combining the high-mindedness, the elevation of a Washington, the commonsense and sturdy character of a Lincoln, the astute realism of a Richelieu, as to-day when, by the revolution of the years, we finally find ourselves, somewhat aghast, face to face with the critical hour in which we are called upon, whether we like it or no, to justify or to reject, amid the comity of the nations, all our pretentions to being a peculiar people to whom has been vouchsafed a special "manifest destiny" of our own. It is by no fault of the American people, but we have atrociously blundered, and we shall long pay dear for it. We have lost the respect of the nations, the same respect that Greece has lost, without being able to cite, as Greece can cite, any attenuating circumstances. We have ceased to "retain unabated the spirit that has inspired

[1] It is almost a quarter of a century since I wrote (see "Patriotism and Science," page 89; Boston, 1893): "The responsibility of vindicating democracy will be upon the next half-century of American men. They think their *raison d'être* is proved. Vain beating of the eagle wings. The second historical era of the world is passing into its crisis. . . ."

us throughout the life of our Government." It is all the more necessary that we should lose no time in returning for inspiration to our veritable traditions.

The Doctrine of Monroe is of an admirable and pacific suggestion for the present hour; 1916 is engaged in problems which, in many respects, resemble those of 1815 to 1823. To-day, as then, the struggle, as Madison wrote to Jefferson, is between liberty and despotism, between arbitrary power and national independence, between Americanism and a revived form of "lawless Alliance calling itself Holy," which, in the form of a Pan-German banyan tree, has already rooted itself over vast stretches of American soil.

The remark with which I ended my "Problems of Power" in 1913 is to-day more opportune than ever:—

> Franco-Latin co-operation in South America, Anglo-American co-operation in the Islands and on the high seas of the Pacific; a solemn Franco-Anglo-American pact for the peace of the world; such are the potential realities which may already be descried from the heights above Culebra.

That some such dream was not merely realizable but bound to materialize within a brief period was my apparently audacious divination some eighteen months before the tragic August of 1914. The Great World War which we are now witnessing has, I believe, brought its realization nearer. I can only add that the Force of Things, during the march of the Great

World War, has tended emphatically to corroborate this view.

The idea which I recommended to the attention of Washington in 1913 has had the fortune to meet with the approval of Dr. Charles W. Eliot, the President Emeritus of Harvard. On March 12, 1916, the *New York Times* contained a remarkable discussion by him of the world situation, written at Bermuda, one of the pivots of the world-politics of the future. In this message President Eliot stated the incontestable fact that the great majority of the American people "sympathize with and cordially approve all the desires or objects of Russia, Great Britain, France and Italy, and condemn with equal decision the desires of Germany and Austria-Hungary; for the desires of the four Entente Allies are consistent with the ideals of freedom, justice and brotherhood which all true Americans cherish, and the desires or aims of Germany and Austria-Hungary are not." Moreover, Americans, he added, with few exceptions, detest militarism, with its necessary accompaniment, conscription and competitive arming, and would therefore welcome international agreements for diminishing these evils in Europe hereafter. "They perceive, too, that . . the Americans are not so detached from Europe and Asia as they were thirty or even ten years ago, and that Washington's wise advice against entangling alliances is by no means as applicable to American needs and interests to-day as it was when it was uttered."

What is President Eliot's conclusion? He urges that it is undoubtedly the interest of the Americans to protect themselves at all costs from invasion by Germany. "The promptest, surest and most advantageous method of accomplishing that result is entrance by the United States into a permanent offensive and defensive alliance with Great Britain and France to maintain the freedom of the seas for these allies under all circumstances, and to oppose attack by sea on any one of them. . . . Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey will not be admissible to this new alliance, because they so easily absolve themselves from keeping their word."

This commonsense, statesmanlike proposal of Dr. Eliot is the exact opposite of the project which—for motives that are not entirely clear, but some of which are obvious, namely, the wish, on the eve of the Presidential elections, to command the influence of the still powerful ex-colleague of the President, the ex-Secretary of State, Mr. Bryan, who, immediately on his resigning office, harangued 25,000 German-Americans and Clan na Gael Irish in Madison Square, New York, in language of the most peace-sentiment fustian—Mr. Wilson expounded at Washington on May 27, 1916, in a carefully prepared speech before the so-called "League to Enforce Peace." Mr. Wilson began by declaring: "With the causes and objects of this great war we are not concerned. The obscure fountains from which its stupendous flood has burst forth we are not

interested to search for or to explore." This was an utterance annihilating all the moral values hitherto held precious by American idealism, but it was quite the sort of logical Pharaonic comment to be expected of the man who had forgotten to take the step required for the defence of the political and national interests of the American people. Mr. Wilson, thereupon, sought to argue that, inasmuch as the real cause of the war was secret diplomacy(!), the great nations of the world must reach " some sort of agreement as to what they hold to be fundamental to their common interest, and as to some feasible method of acting in concert when any nation, or group of nations, seeks to disturb these fundamental things." " The principle of public right," he added, " must henceforth take precedence over the individual interests of particular nations "— as if those " principles of public right " had not been the very principles which the Allies, rising up in their righteous indignation against brutal Prussian aggression, had been for long years striving to introduce into international affairs; as if there were any other practical way of bringing in the reign of Public Law than by a frank choice between the belligerents in the present war, and a consequent demand that they who had, arbitrarily and wantonly, sought to wreck civilization should be summoned before the bar of the universal conscience and justly punished! Mr. Wilson then laid it down as " the passionate conviction of America " that

"every people has the right to choose the sovereignty under which they shall live like other nations," but he neglected to explain why he had not proclaimed this principle when the Austrians were bombarding Belgrade and the Germans were sacking Louvain. And, these things said, he came to the point which was the object of his speech :—

So sincerely do we believe in these things that I am sure I speak the mind and wish of the people of America when I say that the United States is willing to become a partner in any feasible association of nations, formed in order to realize these objects and to make them secure against violation. There is nothing the United States wants for itself that any other nation has. We are willing, on the contrary, to limit ourselves, along with them, to the prescribed course of duty and respect for the rights of others which will check any selfish passion of our own as it will check any aggressive impulse of theirs. If it should ever be our privilege to suggest or initiate a movement for peace among the nations now at war, I am sure the people of the United States would wish their Government to move along these lines :—

1. Such a settlement with regard to their own immediate interests as the belligerents may agree upon. We have nothing material of any kind to ask for ourselves, and are quite aware that we are in no sense or degree parties to the present quarrel. Our interest is only in peace and its future guarantees.

2. A universal association of nations to maintain inviolate the security of the highway of the seas for the common, unhindered use of all the nations of the world, and to prevent any war begun either contrary to treaty covenants or without warning and full submission of

the cause to the opinion of the world—a virtual guarantee of territorial integrity and political independence.

"A universal association of nations . . . !" Such, then, is the unstatesmanlike dream of the responsible head of one of the foremost States of the world, almost two years after the outbreak of a war which is being waged in conditions that stultify every possible pretext for harbouring such a dangerous Utopia. Mr. Wilson hereby resuscitated, with even less sense of opportuneness than President Taft, a slightly altered version of the famous proposals of his predecessor in 1911, relative to the settlement of "matters of national honour" by Courts of Arbitration. These proposals, which were welcomed on March 13, 1911, by Sir Edward Grey, as "bold and courageous words," worked such sad havoc in England during the two years preceding the Great War that their consequences became one of the immediate causes of Germany's decision to carry out her plans of universal domination without delay. At the outbreak of the war, President Nicholas Murray Butler, of the University of Columbia, predicted that the war would develop a "tendency towards a United States of Europe,"[1] and, some weeks later, he suggested that Europe might learn certain lessons from the history of the American federal system, in order "to find

[1] See "The United States as a World Power: an interview with Nicholas Murray Butler by Edward Marshall," reprinted from the *New York Times* of May 16, 1915.

some method after the war of so organizing as to develop a common will." Mr. Wilson's Bryanitic suggestions bear a curious family likeness with such deplorably uncritical comments on current world events. Even more remarkable, however, is the parallel between the ideas of Mr. Wilson and the telegram published in the *Abend* of Vienna by its Berlin correspondent, as reported by Count Reventlow :—

I am assured by the authoritative quarter of the accuracy of the following interpretation of those parts of the Imperial Chancellor's conversation (*i.e.*, with Mr. von Wiegand) which concern Germany's readiness for peace negotiations :—

1. Germany rejects as not open to discussion Sir Edward Grey's expressed demand (*sic*) that the preparation of peace negotiations shall be made dependent upon a mediation proposal which takes into account the guilty responsibility for the outbreak of war. On the one hand, the question has been sufficiently illuminated, and, on the other hand, the Imperial Chancellor has arrived at the firm conviction that such discussion can in no circumstances yield a positive result. The Imperial Chancellor, therefore, as he indicated, does not intend to return to this point.

2. The German Government must very energetically reject any attempt by the enemy to drag internal German affairs into discussion by way of the peace conference, or to secure any influence with regard to them.

3. Germany is ready for peace. But the only basis for negotiations is the present military situation. Negotiations, whether they come early or late, can have a prospect of success only if they start from the basis of

the military situation existing at the time. Hence it is obvious that Germany's peace conditions will be altered in accordance with the further development of the military situation.[1]

It appears from this inspired interpretation of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's views in the springtime of 1916 that the German Chancellor is no less indifferent than Mr. Wilson to all questions or considerations that concern "the guilty responsibility for the outbreak of the war." Fortunately for the honour of the vast majority of the American people such Pontius Pilate impartiality has long ceased to be—if, indeed, it ever was—a faithful echo of the popular will. It is President Eliot and not President Wilson who is now defending American prestige beyond the seas.

"A universal association of nations" is an absurdity. It ignores very nearly all the data of the problem which the winsome phrase was lightly formulated to solve. On the other hand, some such alliance as has been indicated with the nations that are now defending Right and Public Law is one of those necessities which have been, at every moment of history, the godsend of statesmen.

It is the real truth that England has been for one hundred years our sleeping partner in international business. We have had misunderstandings. Alien influences, Fenian or Prussian, have striven in vain to create a breach between us.

[1] See *The Times*, May 29, 1916.

" There were moments," as Lord Bryce has put it,[1] " when the stiff and frigid attitude of the British Foreign Secretary exasperated the American negotiators, or when a demagogic Secretary of State at Washington tried, by a bullying tone, to win credit as the patriotic champion of national causes." Yet naught has availed positively to sunder the branches of the English-speaking race. The Monroe Doctrine, rightly understood, was, in reality, the broad rock-base of an alliance between England and the United States for the defence of common ideals of freedom. Its logical corollary is a compact for the peace of the world. And such a compact would be so incomplete as to be of vain application if it did not include, at least, that glorious France, which is not only, as Mistral called it, " le chevalier de la civilisation Latine," but is also the knight-errant of Humanity. The author of " The Day of the Saxon " was not exaggerating when he said, before the war: " In the preservation of the British Empire, rather than in the Doctrine of Monroe, is to be found the basis of the security of the American nations." Even at this hour the British and the French fleets, whose action has now and then so irritated the merchants of the Two Americas as to have warranted Washington's entering, for form's sake, a mild protest, are fighting critical world battles on which depends

[1] " The British Empire and the United States," by William Archibald Dunning. Introduction by James Bryce, p. xxxvii. Scribner.

the peaceful development of American interests north and south of Panama and in the Pacific for the next fifty years. Such is the ignorance of the United States of international conditions that hardly any American had the slightest notion, for instance, of the fact that if, during the present war, England's fleet had not preserved the British Islands virtually inviolate, while maintaining real "freedom of the seas," and demonstrating the vital importance of sea-power, humiliation of the United States would have ensued, and no "neutrality" would have been possible for our country.

These are facts which, while they impose upon us the necessity of creating for ourselves a systematic and methodical world policy, supported on the fleet and army of our policy, will enable us, in defensive co-operation with the two other great liberal Powers of the world, to secure the inevitable readjustments of the immediate future, while giving us the time and the taste to become a nation. Only thus shall we be able, without friction and for peaceful ends, to deal completely with the vast problem that confronts us both within and beyond our shores. We are masters not only of the Panama Canal but of Guam, Kiska, Honolulu; but we are no longer dominant in the waters of Samoa. We are the Protectors of Central America and the Caribbean; but we are, in spite of the Pan-American banqueters, the potential rival of the South American Great Powers, and we are now

the forlorn champions of the Open Door in Asia. At the same time we are, as President Wilson has said, momentarily "at peace with all the world." Let us not, by any "sin of omission," fail to take the precautions that will suffer us honourably to remain "at peace with all the world," and to make ready for the economic clash between Asia and the West.

Am I hinting at the need of a revolution? I have no fear of the word, for I fear other things more. No great nation can afford to be forgetful of the maxim of Spinoza: "Liberty or strength of soul are the virtues of private persons; the virtue of the State is security." People that do not want to believe what they believe are predestined to the habit of believing what they want to believe. This means that the people who have a tendency to believe what they want to believe are they who hesitate to look facts in the face. Whatever the experimental effort of this or that political party in the United States of North America to shirk national responsibility, to thwart the Force of things, the good sense of the people of our country will eventually insist on lifting national interests out of the reach of party politics. There is a famous phrase of Gambetta at Lille: "Quand la France aura entendu sa voix souveraine, il faudra se soumettre ou se démettre."

When, completely alive to the positive realities which, whether we like it or no, are to determine the national policy of our country, we Americans

" give expression to our sovereign will," any political party—Democratic, Progressive or Republican—which fails to listen, " will either have to become resigned or to resign."

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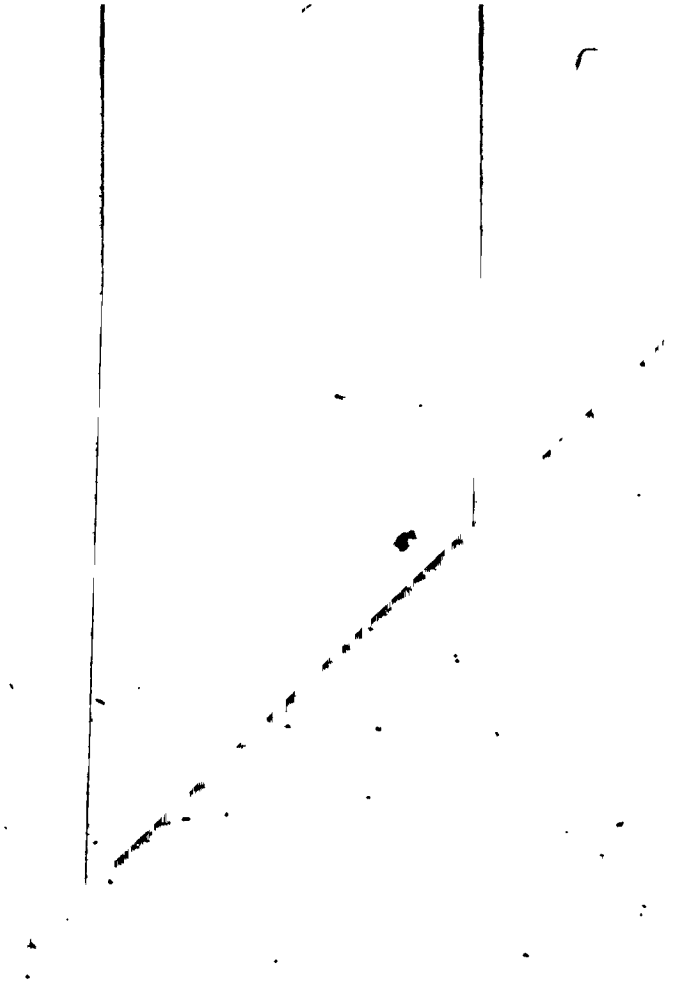

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